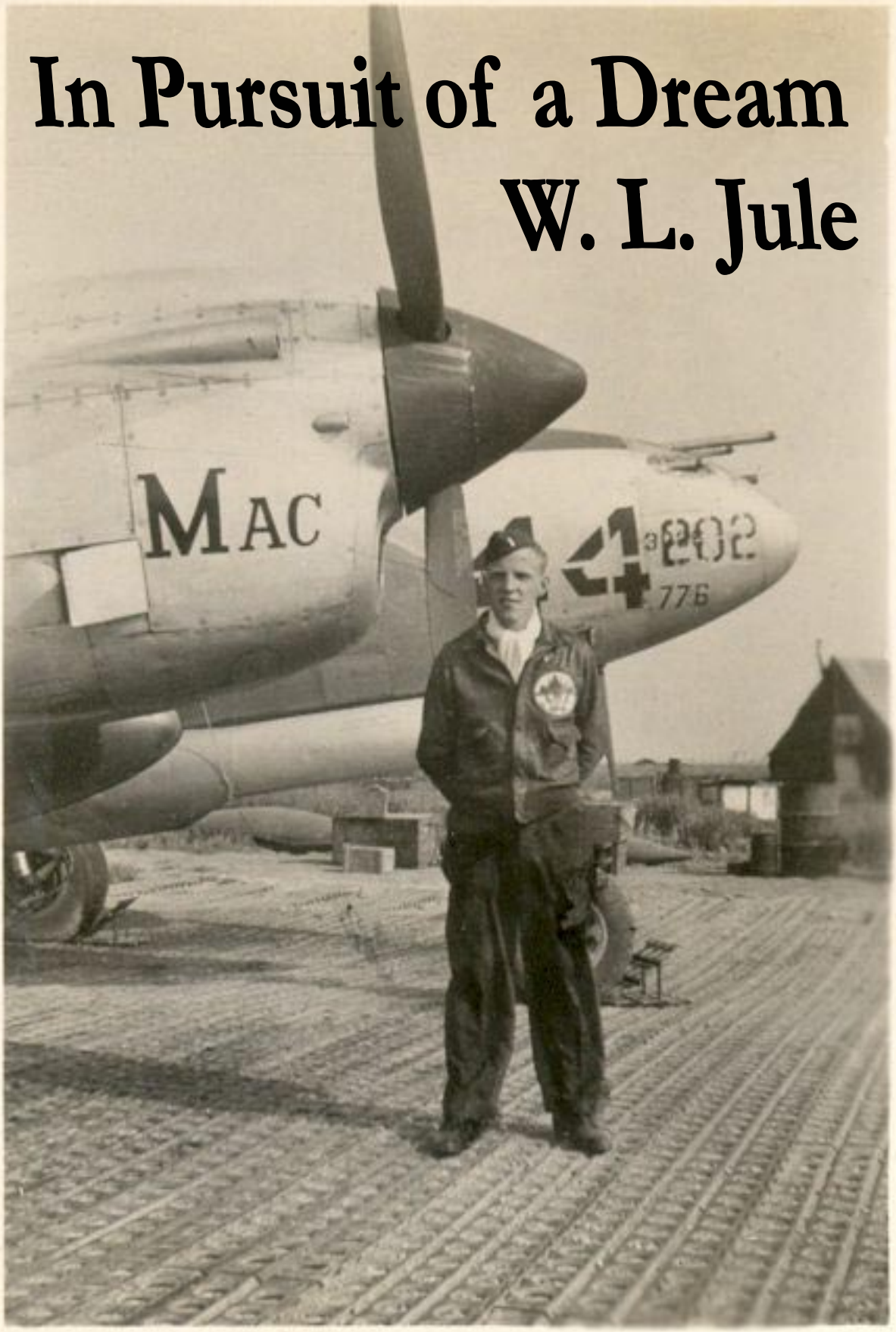
In Pursuit of a Dream

W. L. Jule



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Foreword

The Story Behind The Story

It all started several years ago when Mac read in a "Time-Life" magazine that they were asking veterans to send in stories of their wartime adventures. "Time-Life" would then select one or more for publication at some later date. Mac mentioned this to me and I ignored the idea. I really didn't have much to write about.

About a week later, Mac asked again if I was going to submit my story. I said, "Yes, I suppose I could," but still was not too keen on the idea. However, I got out the pencil and pad and started writing.

A week later she asked if I was about finished and I replied, "No," she then informed me that I was limited to five hundred words per story. That came as a real shocker as I wasn't aware of that. I'm sure she had mentioned it, but I didn't pay attention. It was especially bad news as I had already written several thousand words and was just getting started. Thus the dilemma – to continue or call it quits.

I had already spent many hours on the manuscript, so I hated to abandon the project. Perhaps the kids and grandkids would be interested in what their Dad/Granddad did during the big war. I proceeded.

Six months later I was still writing and beginning to get the feeling that I may have made a mistake in starting the project. Well, I thought I'd gone this far so I may as well continue.

Six months later I knew for certain it was all a bad mistake and I should quit while I still had pencils and my sanity. But being a stubborn optimist, I figured the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel" should appear before too long, so I pushed on.

Several months later I finally saw the "light" and finished the first draft. Then came the problem

of reading it. I had written it in long hand and neither Mac nor I could read it! It was necessary to convert the hieroglyphics into recognizable form, so Mac could type it. What a chore that was! My fingers are still frozen in a hold-a-pencil shape.

Once that was completed, then came the tedious task of reading and re-reading and making corrections in sentences and spelling. I can report to you that the old dictionary and I became good friends before I was finished.

But all of that was easy compared to Mac's enormous task of typing, re-typing and then typing some more. That seemed like an endless process, but she stayed with it and did an outstanding job. However, I have the distinct feeling that she is not too anxious for me to start another story.

In the meantime our son Bob became interested in the project and suggested I gather all the photos and pictures and include them in the story. That sounded reasonable so all the materials were assembled and sent off to Bob in Roswell, New Mexico. Upon receipt, all documents were organized and then computerized which brings us to the present time.

I hope you enjoy the story. It is a history of three years of my life which would otherwise not be known to my children and grandchildren. That in itself makes it all worthwhile. It's even more so if it gives the reader a chuckle or two.

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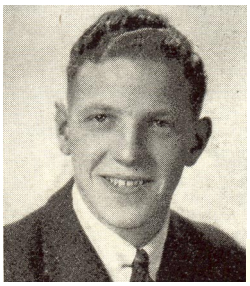
Chapter I

There are no heroes in this story, no activities above and beyond the call of duty. No gutter language and no torrid, or should I say sordid, love scenes. It is simply a narrative of a sixteen-year-old lad set adrift on a predestined and pre-chartered river of life that was to span a five-year period. Sounds corny, doesn't it? Yet, it is about the most accurate description I can come up with. I have purposely tried to avoid exaggeration of the events - as Jack Webb used to say,

"Only the facts, Ma' am."

First, let me introduce myself: Jule, Wesley L., Private; Flight Officer; Second Lieutenant; First Lieutenant; Captain; Major. Serial Numbers, 19095265; T61046; AO 1703109; Kriegie 6611; FR 52782. Now that the preliminaries are over, let's get on with the story.



WESLEY L. JULE—Baseball, Traffic Squad.

BASEBALL SQUAD

Second Team: Parker, Gordon, Erlandson, Wise, Ragan, York, Genger, Weisenburger, Jarvie, Wardrop, Henderson, Downard.

First Team: Jule, Miller, R. Richardson, Lewis, McCluskey, Stott, Marshall, Sigfusson (manager), Keeler, Johnson, Baker, Lashua, W. Richardson, O'Donnell, Stephan, Hilton.

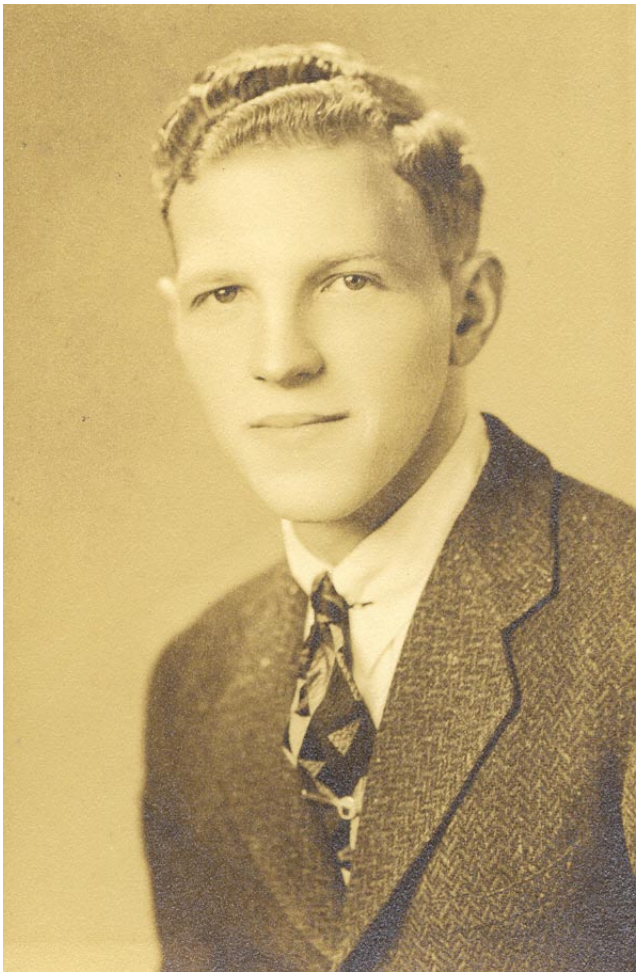
1942 Bellingham High School

On April 1, 1940, destiny set me adrift at the age of sixteen. I was not aware that for years to come it was to be the pivotal point of my entire life. That was the day I had an emergency operation for a ruptured appendix. So what is so pivotal about that? Nothing really except it marked the beginning of the journey - adrift with the currents pushing and pulling on waters sometimes calm, other times very turbulent, waterfalls submerging me only to allow me to resurface and continue my journey toward an unknown destiny.

After my recuperation, I returned to school the following September. All was going well. But the currents had other plans for on October 13, I had an emergency operation for appendicitis. It seems the first time I went in for my emergency appendix operation; the surgeon's thought that my appendix had ruptured so badly that there was nothing left of it. They just cleaned me out and sewed me up. Unfortunately, they had been mistaken. This time they removed my appendix.

Considering the huge medical bills and the fact that I had lost six weeks of school, my folks and I decided that it would be better for me to get a job to help with the bills and then return to school the following September. Time moved rapidly at my job at the Bloedell-Donovan Sash and Door factory. Soon September 1941, arrived and it was back to school for me.

Then the Day of Infamy arrived: Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941. There was a general gathering of young men that day and, of course, the main topic was the war and what they planned to do about it. A young buddy of mine suggested we drive over to the Navy Recruiting Station and see what was happening. I had barely stopped the car when all my buddies were out and heading for the end of a long line of Navy volunteers. Bellingham, Washington, on the coast of Puget Sound, was strictly a Navy town, so the volunteer line stretched for blocks. I sat there and watched friends by the dozens disappear into the recruiting station. Some I would see years later. But all too many never returned. As I sat in my families old Model "A" Ford, I told myself I should be in that line too, and not just sitting there watching.



May, 1942, Bellingham, Washington

That evening I talked to my folks about joining the Navy, but they replied to the negative. They told me to finish high school first and then I could join any service I want. I was disappointed, but then, there were only six months of school left and perhaps I could catch up with my friends later on.

It was during that six-month period that I happened to be standing at the main intersection of downtown Bellingham, at Cornwall and Holly Streets to be exact. As I stood there, I glanced across the street and there stood the most magnificent sight I had ever seen. An Army Air Corps Officer wearing polished brown oxfords, pink trousers with green blouse, silver pilot wings, captain bars on his shoulders and the polished brass officer's emblem on his cap. I knew instantly and unquestionably that was for me. Join the Navy? What Navy? U.S. Navy? Never heard of it! I

had seen my dream.

I had ridden several times in an old Ford Tri-motor plane but had never even thought about flying it or any other aircraft. In a blink of an eye all had changed. I was going to be a pilot, wear pinks and greens and have captain bars on my shoulders. There was never a doubt in my mind!

As high school graduation day came nearer, I became impatient with the long days. I had to get started on my dream, so as soon as the diplomas were available, I picked up mine and headed for the recruiting office. On 1 June 1942, I joined the Army Air Corps. My dream was starting to come true. Well, at least I was in the Air Corps.

I was sent to Fort Lewis, Washington, for processing and then on to Sheppard Air Base near Wichita Falls, Texas. That place was just about the end of the world. Take a young boy out of the green lush Washington and send him to that God forsaken place. How could such a thing happen? And the food? Terrible! Being of Danish and Swedish descent, I was accustomed to Swedish cooking. You know, the miracles performed by the ordinary housewife every time a meal was prepared on the old wood-burning stove. Yes. I was spoiled - emphatically yes!

During Basic Training at Sheppard I took the Aviation Cadet examination and eagerly awaited the results. I was a nervous young man when I learned the results were in and reported to the Sergeant's Office. "You came close, but you failed the examination by one point" he told me. He then went on, "There is another Pilot training program you can apply for if you want. It is called the Aviation Student Program. It is identical to the Cadet Program except you would graduate as a staff sergeant instead of a second lieutenant, or, if you wish" you can take the Cadet examination again in three months." A three-month wait was out of the question for me and Staff Sergeant wasn't exactly what I had in mind. But, perhaps I could at least get the silver wings, so I applied.

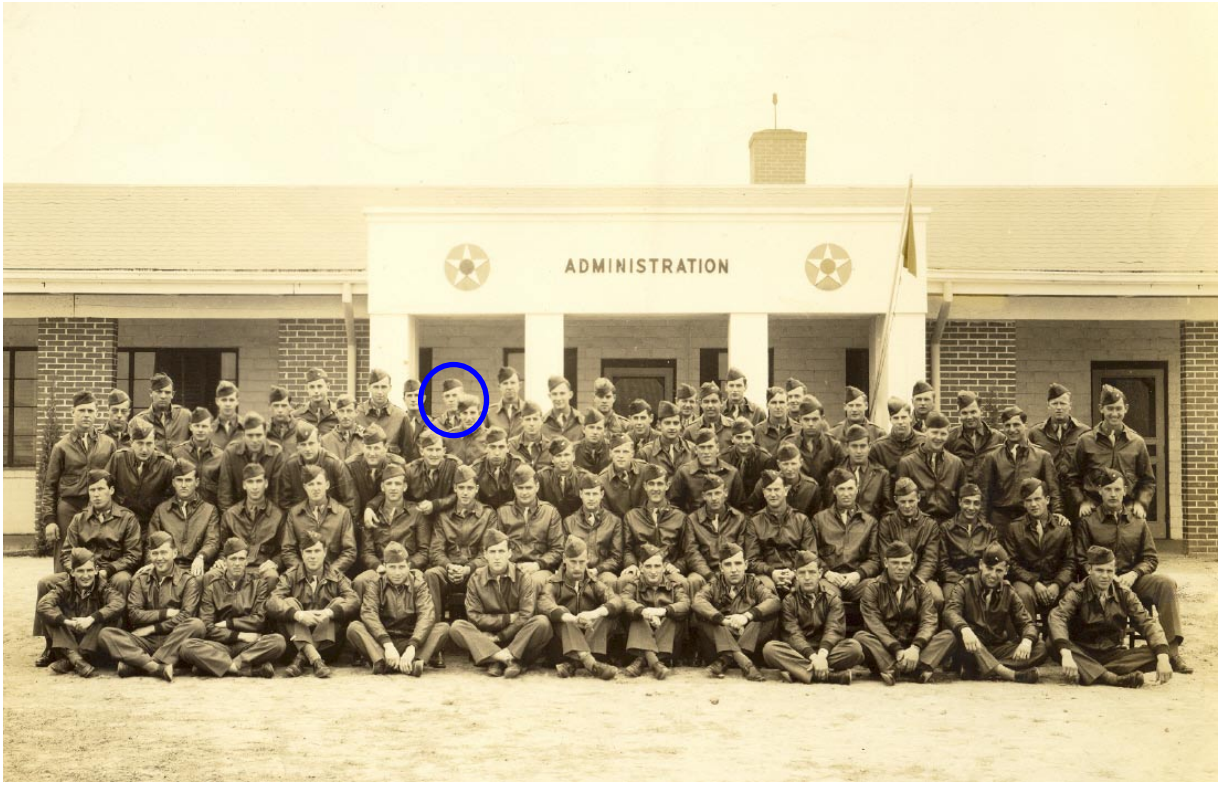
While waiting for the news of acceptance or rejection, I attended the Aircraft Mechanics Course. The course was fine, but the surroundings were less than desirable. In fact, Wichita Falls was the only place I've ever been where I was ankle deep in mud and still had to wipe blowing dust out

of my eyes. "If I ever get out of this place I'll never, ever set foot on Texas soil (dirt, mud and dust) again!" I told myself.

The Texas weather was something else: intense heat and violent thunderstorms that wanted to blow the entire base off of the earth. At times night was like day, with lightning crisscrossing the sky in all directions but strangely enough with no thunder.

Standing retreat was an unforgettable experience. There was always a steady stream of ambulances coming and going from the parade grounds to carry away men who had dropped where they stood from the heat and from standing at attention for long periods of time. Someone told me there was a tree on the base but I never did find it.
I enjoyed basic training with all its challenges. I guess I enjoyed the marching most because competition between squads was very high. Even though our squad tried hard, we just couldn't compete. We had a kid from Arkansas who marched as though he were still behind a plow. All the efforts of the drill instructor were for naught. The kid tried, but he was physically incapable of doing drill exercises and was finally released from the service.

While at Sheppard, there I attended a U.S.A. show when the number one song was "Night and Day". It was sung by some skinny young kid by the name of Frank Sinatra. I thought it was great to see a popular singer. The show was good but nothing spectacular.



Shepard Field

As time went on, there seemed to be only one way to leave Sheppard and Texas and that was to volunteer for something, anything. As a consequence of that thinking, I volunteered for glider pilot and aerial gunner training. However, the currents were still pushing and pulling for, in a few weeks, I was selected for the Aviation Student Program. The quest for the Silver Wings had started. That part of the dream was now a distinct possibility.

I was sent to Maxwell Air Base, Montgomery, Alabama. Upon my arrival, I was assigned to quarters in an old cotton mill just outside the base fence. It was a dilapidated red brick structure, which still housed some old cotton processing machinery, but it was home and soon everyone in my group settled in for preflight training.

Nothing spectacular happened there except we were not subject to any type of hazing such as that experienced by the cadets on the other side of the fence. The reason was quite simple. Among us students were several technical and master sergeants who had returned from combat zones for flight training. They were not going to tolerate any type of hazing from anyone. Thank the good Lord for sergeants! There was one specific incident that I clearly remember. We had a money thief among us. When caught, he was quickly escorted behind the building by some of the

"Big Boys." Shortly thereafter an ambulance arrived and that was the last we saw of the thief.

Preflight training consisted primarily of book learning and physical training, simple things like the various parts of the aircraft and their purpose, then the more complicated subjects such as Morse Code and Weather. Morse Code was used to identify airport facilities on maps and the radio. It was also a means of identifying airports at night. The green rotational light blinked the airport code each time it rotated. So, it was necessary to know the code by sound and sight as well as to be able to transmit it at six words per minute, if I recall correctly.

Weather was a tough subject to me, a cloud was a cloud and that was it. Much to my surprise, there were all types of clouds with peculiar names like cirrus, cumulus and alto-cumulus. But I passed the course. I had to.

I would guess there were seventy-five to eighty students, so K.P. (kitchen police) came around quite often and also guard duty. In spite of the rather crude conditions, everyone seemed to enjoy our stay at Maxwell, but soon it came time to move on. Upon completion of pre-flight training, I was sent to primary training at Augustine Field, approximately twelve miles outside of Jackson, Mississippi. - and into choppy waters.

Georgia-Aero-Tech - 1943 Rush Field - Augusta, Georgia

Once at Augustine, I was assigned to a civilian instructor who was perhaps the most obnoxious individual I've ever encountered - foul-mouthed and ill tempered and that's putting it mildly! After about ten hours of instruction in the Stearman PT -17 primary trainer, he decided that I was a lost cause and scheduled a "washout" ride with another instructor. That one ride would determine whether I continue flight training or packed my bags. My dream of silver wings seemed all but lost.

The "washout" instructor turned out to be the exact opposite of the previous one - a soft-spoken southern gentleman in every respect. Obviously he did not have the same opinion as my first instructor because I was his student for the remainder of primary training. It is strange that I can remember the name of the first but cannot remember the name of the second" good" instructor, the one who guided me through turbulent waters and instilled in me the confidence that I could fly and fly well.

During my training, there was one accident that made a lasting impression on my memory. Two aircraft collided, killing both occupants. I learned that the name of the game for survival was the constant checking of the airspace three hundred and sixty degrees in all directions, including above and below.

One day a BT -15 (basic trainer) landed and we students were all eager to inspect it and look into the cockpit of the plane we were going to fly next. I was astounded by the number of instruments, buttons and switches that seemed to cover every available space. The PT -17 had perhaps ten instruments while the BT -15 had them by the dozens! How in the world was I ever going to learn to fly it and, even more important what did all those gadgets mean? It was going to be a real challenge!

Christmas arrived and I can still hear Bing Crosby singing "White Christmas" on the Day Room jukebox. There were many homesick young men who, like myself, were experiencing their first Christmas away from home.

Primary training provided an extra dividend as our pay was increased from fifty dollars a month to seventy-five. Fifty dollars regular pay plus fifty percent extra as flying pay. This increase was indeed welcomed but still, we were all broke by the middle of the month.

After the completion of primary training, our next stop was Georgia-Aero-Tech Basic Flying School at Bush Field near Augusta, Georgia, for transition into the BT -15. Nothing really exciting took place other than I was the first student to solo. Doesn't sound like much but tradition required the "first to solo" to be more or less considered a hero. And so it was – the hand shakes and the pats on the back were most welcome. But there was something else far more important: the personal satisfaction that my "washout" instructor had not misplaced his confidence in me. What a warm and pleasant feeling that was.

For advanced training in the AT-6 (Texan) I was sent to Spence Field near Moultrie, Georgia. My instructor, at Moultrie, was a captain who was a congenial person but who, when necessary

could get his point across in unmistakable terms. With his help, just maybe my dream of silver wings would become a reality.

The AT-6 was a very enjoyable aircraft to fly. With lots of power and smooth easy controls, it was a most "forgiving" aircraft. By "forgiving" I mean that a pilot could really foul things up and yet the aircraft would "forgive" the mistakes and continue flying. It was a beautiful airplane to fly.

My first night flight in the AT-6 turned into a rather interesting event. The flight transition area was divided into quadrants - N.E., N.W., S.E., and S.W. The object was to stack aircraft in each quadrant with a thousand feet vertical clearance between aircraft. Once the assigned altitude was reached, it was a matter of circling in the quadrant for an hour or so. I was assigned the top position, which, as I recall, was at five thousand feet. All was going well and I enjoyed the flight and the beautiful lights of the base and Moultrie. Then the electrical system went out. No wingtip lights, landing lights, no cockpit lights and no radio. With the collision I had seen at Primary in mind, it posed a problem. How to get down through the other three circling aircraft, get into the landing pattern and get the green light for landing from the tower? "I hope no one else is having the same problem I'm having!" I thought as I very carefully descended through the other aircraft and entered the landing pattern.

The next stage in my descent was to alert the tower that I was having difficulties and was in need of a green light. The only way to do that was to buzz the tower and increase the RPM's of my engine as I passed overhead. No luck the first two passes. The third pass was at a "buzzing low" altitude while I increased the RPM to the maximum and then fluctuated the RPM as I passed overhead. It worked because the tower heard someone or me notified the tower. I was given the green light and I landed without any further problems.

Approximately three weeks before graduation, I was sent to an auxiliary field near Tifton, Georgia, to transition into the P-40. The P-40 Period, that is. These aircraft were among the first manufactured and had not been modified. They were also the aircraft that had been flown by the Flying Tigers in China and then returned to the States for student pilot training. They had sharks

teeth and small Japanese flags painted on the engine cowlings and lots of patched bullet holes.

Boy was I impressed! I was going to fly them. Me, a nineteen year old kid! I didn't know it then, but I was about to enter some extremely turbulent waters and was heading for a waterfall.

One day while in training, I was making long power-on approaches in the P-40 with no flaps, touching the wheels on the runway and then taking off again. I had made several touch-and-goes and was on my last one when disaster struck.

As usual, I had completed the mandatory radio call to the tower on the downwind leg saying, "... on the downwind leg, fuel on reserve, wheels down and locked, five hundred feet altitude for power-on approach and landing."

I then turned on the base leg, which took me directly over Tifton. The next ten to fifteen seconds seemed like something out of a nightmare. The engine quit directly over the town. Anyone who has ever flown a P-40 knows that when the engine quits the aircraft drops like a rock.

I was too low for a bailout, so I knew I had to set this plane down some place and quickly, but where? A quick look at Tifton's main street told me that wasn't the answer! At about the 9:30 position I spotted a small field surrounded by woods with a house at the far end. I had already dropped the nose the instant the engine quit, so now the plane was in a steep glide. I turned toward the field but there was a tall brick factory chimney dead ahead. I had to get around it first before worrying about the landing. By the time I cleared the chimney, I was already clipping the tops off the pine trees. During those few seconds, I had pulled the landing gear handle to the "up" position because I couldn't take the chance of flipping over when hitting the ground. I had also turned the main electrical switch and the gas switch to the "off" position.

January, 1943 - Augusta, Georgia

Immediately after clearing the chimney, I jettisoned the canopy. I was now set for the landing. As I neared the ground, the trees were getting larger in diameter and the plane jolted as I clipped each one. At the same time, I spotted a small gully at the approach end of the field and the numerous stumps that dotted the field. Nothing I could do about them now. I pulled the nose up to clear the gully and then popped the stick forward and literally flew the plane into the ground. It was a terribly bumpy ride that followed, as the plane tore stump after stump out of the ground. The aircraft finally stopped about fifty feet from the house and I jumped out of it like a shot. I wanted no part of a fire or an explosion.

As I ran from the plane I heard screams coming from the house followed by a lady who ran out shouting, "Oh my God! Oh my God!" as I walked over to her she was still screaming, "Oh my God!" After convincing her that I was all right and apologizing for tearing up her field, she asked what was to become a frequent question. "Is there anyone else in the plane?" "No, just me," I replied.

By that time spectators had started arriving, so within a few minutes several hundred people were standing around talking among themselves and to me. Was there anyone else in the plane with you was a question I guess I answered a dozen times or more. It seemed like a dumb question to me, as there was only one seat in the plane. But in a few minutes everything seemed to be under control, so I walked back to the plane and sat down on a wingtip. It was then I saw the numerous humps and bumps on the leading edge of the wing. The trees and stumps had mangled the wing almost beyond recognition. Thank goodness the P-40 was built like a tank. It stayed in one piece despite the terrible beating it had taken. I salute the designers and engineers who created that plane.

While sitting there on the wingtip, I could hear the on-lookers describe what they had seen. One said he saw the plane clip the brick chimney and another said he saw the plane on fire. Each one had seen something different and was willing to swear to his version of what had happened. I was a very dejected nineteen year old waiting there on the plane. My dream had vanished. No silver wings, no pinks and greens and no captain's bars. The dream was gone! What had I done wrong? What could I have done otherwise? How could it be that I came so close (two weeks) to turning at least part of my dream into reality, only to lose it in a matter of seconds? There was only one consolation - I was still alive!

It was about ten to fifteen minutes before I heard the sirens from Spence Field heading my way. They grew louder and were just a few hundred feet away when they started to fade. They continued to fade until I could no longer hear them. A few minutes later back they came. They had missed the lady's driveway. I thought to myself, "That's about par for the course today!"

Two jeep loads of Military Police led the parade, followed by two fire trucks with an ambulance

bringing up the rear. The ambulance came to an abrupt halt; two corpsmen jumped out, opened the rear door, grabbed a stretcher and made a mad dash toward me. I got up and started walking towards them when one said, "Lay down on the stretcher!" I replied I was okay and continued walking toward the ambulance.

"You've got to lay down on the stretcher!"

"No, I'm okay, I'll just sit in the back of the ambulance" I said.

This time the corpsman, with a not-so-friendly tone of voice, said, "We can't take you to the hospital until you are on the stretcher!"

It had been a bad day and it was going to get worse before the day was through. I wasn't going to solve anything by arguing so I lay down on the stretcher, was placed in the ambulance and we were off with sirens wailing.

Upon arrival at the hospital, I was carried into the emergency room where several doctors were waiting. After many questions and much jabbing and poking to make sure everything was where it was supposed to be, I was declared okay and fit for duty. I was informed that there was a board of officers waiting for me at Headquarters and was instructed to report there immediately. This was it - the end of the line!

The board was chaired by a colonel with several lieutenant colonels and majors attending. Not a friendly face among them. Back in those days a private didn't even talk to a corporal or a sergeant on his own initiative. Talking to an officer just wasn't done and talking to high-ranking officers meant but one thing - trouble, serious trouble.

"Do you feel all right?"

"Yes, Sir."

"The board would like to hear your version of what happened in as much detail as possible."

I repeated the story - over Tifton at five hundred feet, my engine quit, and I described how I made the emergency landing.

The colonel then asked if I knew why the engine had quit and I replied "No, Sir."
His next words stunned me!

"You ran out of gas on the reserve tank. The main tanks had plenty of fuel but the reserve tank was empty."

I thought to myself "How could I have been so stupid?" I deserved to be washed out of the Program! I had followed "Gas on Reserve" instructions, but that wasn't going to help me now. The washout rate in flight training was very high. In fact, it seemed that any reason was sufficient to send a student packing, especially failure to follow instructions.

The colonel had started speaking again and I fully expected him to say. "Pack your bags and return to Spence." Instead he said, "Before you came in, we were discussing the accident – trying to figure out how you managed to get the plane down in such a small field. We still don't know how you did it, but apparently you do have a little flying talent. Report to the Flight Line. There is another aircraft waiting for you." My reply was without a doubt the most enthusiastic "Yes, Sir!" I have ever uttered. My dream was still alive!

The thinking of the military back then was far different than today. If a pilot could walk away from a crash he was, as soon as possible, put back in the cockpit and told to get airborne. No psychologist with batteries of psychological tests to determine psychological damage. We were given just a simple, but very effective order. "Get in the plane and fly it!"

Later as I was getting taxi clearance from the tower, they informed me there had been a change in the pilot radio call to the tower prior to landing. Henceforth, following the "fuel on reserve tank" report, the pilot would now state the amount of fuel remaining in the tank so the tower

could issue special instructions if necessary. I didn't know a regulation could be changed so quickly

After takeoff, I again made the mandatory power-on approaches and each time I flew over the Tifton field, I too, could not believe that only a few hours earlier I had landed on that little postage stamp.

Was I scared during the five to ten second period of that landing? No, there was no time to worry about what might happen. I was too busy concentrating on the landing. Was I scared meeting the board? A very positive "Yes" to that one.

Another interesting incident occurred a day or two after my crash when we were scheduled for night flying. To decrease the time delay of one pilot getting out of the plane and another one in, operations were temporarily placed near the end of the active runway. There were not enough planes available for all the students, so while some flew, the rest of us stood around waiting for our turn. Four or five of us were standing by as our instructor watched the takeoffs and landings. We watched as one of our group taxied out and lined up with the runway. He applied full power and started down the runway then he suddenly veered left off the runway and headed across the field. He had failed to set the rudder trim tab to the takeoff position. Our instructor was talking to the pilot but with no radio.

"Pull the throttle back! Pull the power back!" He kept saying very quietly. "He'll never make it he'll never make it." Much to his surprise and ours we watched as the wingtip lights continued to gain altitude and flew off into the night.

Upon landing our instructor quietly informed the pilot that he was lucky to be alive and emphasized that it was an absolute necessity to set that trim tab. The tremendous torque created by the engine during takeoff had to be compensated for by a small adjustable trim tab on the rudder, which would hold the aircraft on a straight line during takeoff. Rudder control by using the foot controls was an impossible task at full power. There was just not enough strength in a pilot's legs.

The instructor told the pilot to get back in the plane for another takeoff and to do it right this time. Again, we watched as he lined up with the runway, but what happened next was unbelievable. He did an exact rerun of the first take-off! The only thing different was the instructor. What he was yelling at the pilot was not exactly complimentary. In fact it would be best for us to move a little further down the line until our instructor and the pilot could complete their "discussion" upon his return. In a way it was comforting for me to know that the other students would and could encounter turbulent waters yet survive.

Once we completed our P-40 training at Tifton, we returned to Spence Field and went back to flying At-6's. My first flight was with my instructor sharing dual controls. At about two thousand feet the engine quit. In a split second my hand was on the fuel switch changing from the "off" position and back to main tanks. Then I looked in the rear view mirror and there sat my instructor with an ear-to-ear grin on his face. He cut the engine again on several later flights, but he never caught me napping on that one. Each time he had that same ear-to-ear grin.

Sometime during my nine-month training period, Congress decided it was not being financially responsible to entrust a staff sergeant with such an expensive piece of equipment as an airplane.

To remedy that situation they created a flight officer rank. This rank was identical to the Army's Warrant Officer Program. The only difference was the flight officer's bar was blue instead of the warrant officer's brown. Also, included in the bill was a provision that if a flight officer performed well, and was still alive after a one-year period, he would be commissioned as a second lieutenant. There was hope for me to be an officer once again.

My graduation from flight training came on 29 April 1943. What an exhilarating day it was! My silver wings were pinned on by the Base Commander and I was presented with a pair of flight officer's bars. I was on cloud nine! Immediately following the ceremony, I was issued a complete new officer's wardrobe courtesy of the Army Air Corps. Those pinks and greens. A little on the wrinkled side but still absolutely beautiful. Just to touch them sent a chill through me - I was no longer a private. Two-thirds of my dream had become a reality and the possibility still existed of getting those captain's bars. Perhaps I could yet complete my dream. To add to the enjoyment of the day, my pay was now raised to one hundred and fifty dollars a month plus seventy-five dollars flying pay. A salary of two hundred and twenty-five dollars a month was a lot of money in those days.

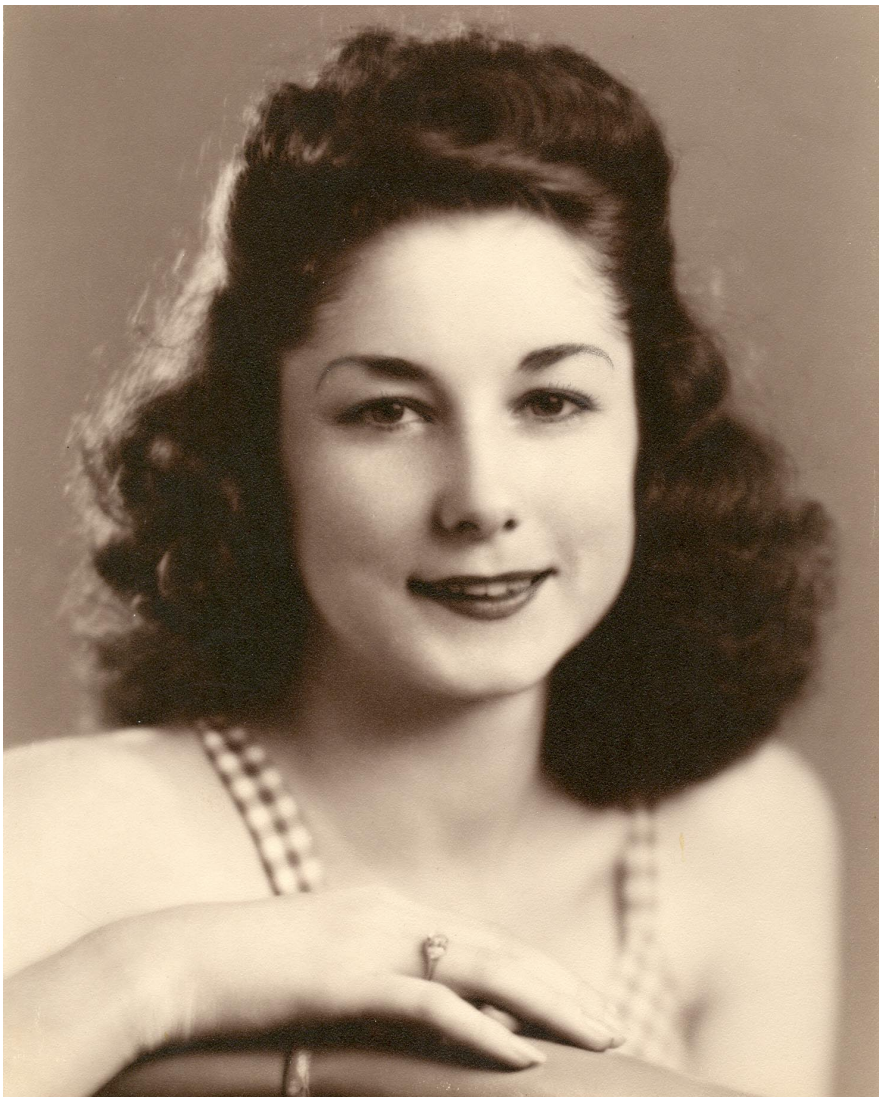
All the graduates were granted a ten-day leave and I elected to visit my sister, whom I hadn't seen in a long time, in San Antonio, Texas. Returning to Texas didn't appeal to me, but maybe San Antonio would be different. Upon my arrival I learned that my sister was in Sam Houston Army Hospital expecting a baby at any time. Now, it was terribly embarrassing that I, a nineteen-year-old fighter pilot - the envy of every able-bodied man, the "cream of the crop" with the appropriate ego to match, should have to enter a maternity ward. Well, I had to do it, so best get started. I checked in at the nurse's station where the head nurse was reluctant to allow me into the ward, as it was not visiting hours.

After I explained the situation, she agreed to let me in.

As I entered the ward, the first thing I noticed was a long and rather narrow room with perhaps twenty to twenty five beds on either side of the center aisle and all were occupied. How was I going to find her among all those ladies? Ha, there she was about four beds down and talking to someone on the phone. Being the only male in the room, I was well aware of all the eyes looking in my direction. I approached the bed and stood there till she hung up the phone. I immediately

bent down and gave her a big hug and a kiss. I was about to tell her how nice it was to see her when a loud voice came from the far end of the room, "Hey, Wes, I'm down here!"

What could I say other than "I'm sorry Ma'am," and make a hasty retreat, taking my severely damaged ego with me. Yes, I did give my sister a big hug and a kiss despite all the laughter and chuckling that took place. Years later my sister told me that shortly after my departure that day, she was approached by the lady who asked, "Do you have any other brothers in the area that may be coming to see you?" The woman never did give a reason for asking the question, so I can only speculate as to what it was. Either she enjoyed the hug and kiss, or she was going to demand that the ward doors be kept locked.



Maxine Richards

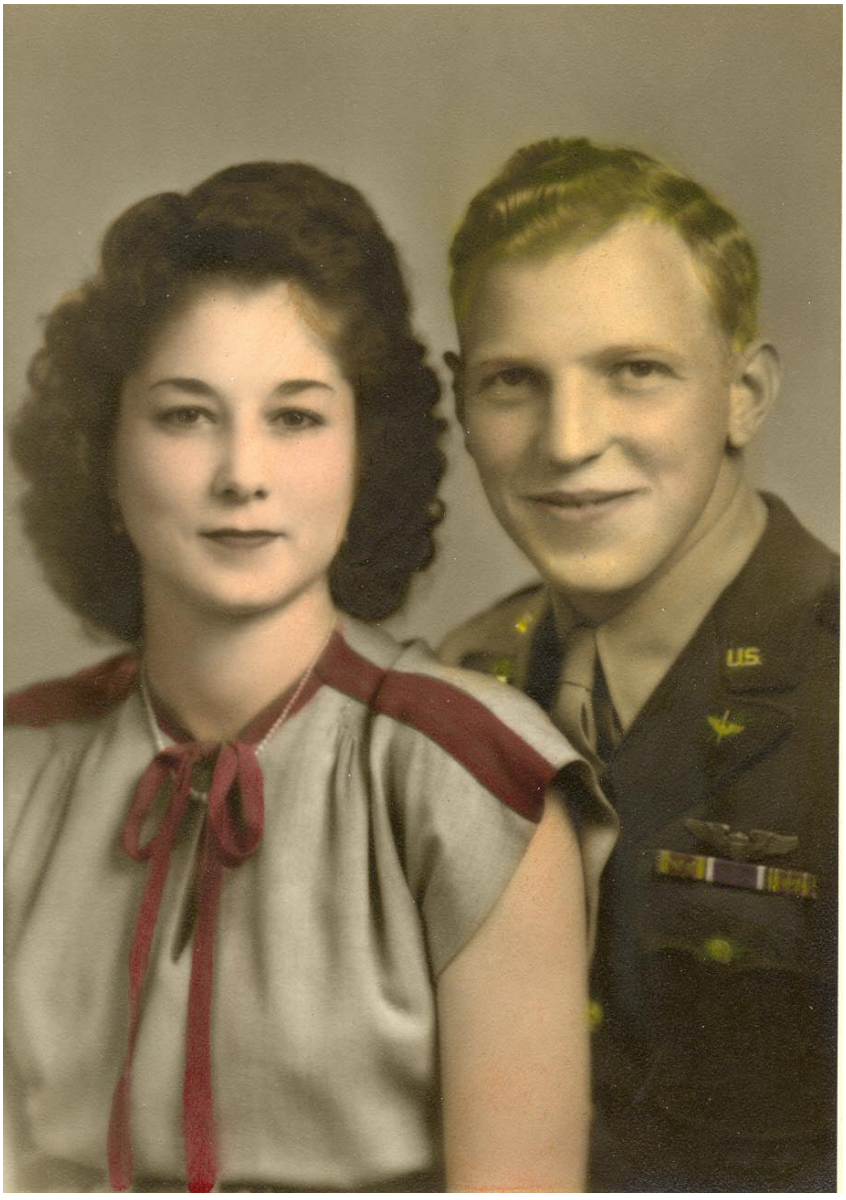
That embarrassing event was soon to be more than compensated for when, a few days later; I met my "San Antonio Rose" - Maxine, Mac for short. I met Mac at the Manhattan Café immediately adjacent to the Majestic Theater in downtown San Antonio. I had attended a performance by the Ink Spots at the theater and afterwards stopped in at the cafe for a cup of coffee and there she was, sitting in a booth with a Western Union co-worker. There was no doubt in my mind that she was going to be my future bride. I mentioned this for a specific reason. Neither of us knew at the time that she would become a crucial factor to my survival months later.

Upon completion of my ten day leave, I reported in to a combat training unit at Hillsboro County Airport just north of Tampa, Florida on what I believe is now the site of the Busch Gardens. The instructors were experienced combat pilots and what a rowdy bunch they were. A big night for them was to go into a Tampa bar and start a mock fight. When the whole room was involved, they'd quietly slip out the front door and watch as the military police arrived and hustled the innocent participants off to the guardhouse. But they were excellent pilots and instructors, so to each his own.

The waters carrying me along were smooth as I continued flying the P-40 and also transitioned to the A-36. The A-36 was the dive-bomber and ground support version of the P-51. What a beautiful aircraft that was! Comparing the P-51 to the P-40 was like comparing the present day power steering auto with the 1929 Buick, which, with a little luck, could be maneuvered by both hands on the steering wheel.

After returning from my leave, I hadn't been able to forget

Mac and had maintained a correspondence with her by sending her collect telegrams through Western Union where she worked. Her boss eventually got tired of my correspondence, so after a couple of months I followed Army protocol and requested my commander's consent to marry and also a three day pass. He answered to the affirmative, so that evening Mac and I were married. She had arrived a day earlier after a two-day train ride from San Antonio to Tampa. The usual three day waiting period was waived for us, as was the case in most weddings involving military personnel.



Maxine R. and Wesley L. Jule

Chapter II

In spite of my three-day pass, the day after our wedding I received word to report to the base because all "students" were being transported by truck to a field near Orlando, Florida. Again I visited the commander and he decided I could continue the three-day pass and then fly over to join the rest of the unit. I headed back to Tampa to my bride. It didn't work out quite that way; I was informed by the desk clerk that she had checked out. The other wives had persuaded her to join them and go to their husband's new assignment. So back to the base I went for a long and lonely night.

The next day I got in a P-40 and headed for the new base - and to Mac. Upon my arrival, I learned it had all been a mistake and everyone, including Mac, was headed back to Hillsboro and Tampa. Well, I finally caught up with her and the honeymoon continued.

A day or two later we moved to a hotel in Sulphur Springs - an old wood building with a bar downstairs and rooms above. At that time "Pistol Packing Mama" was the top tune so we listened to it continuously, day and night, from the jukebox downstairs. It became our "wedding song" - more or less.

Two weeks later we were all in Tallahassee waiting for overseas orders. It was there that final good-byes were spoken. At that time Mac gave me a small ring, which I promptly placed on my left little finger. A few more waves and she was out of sight.

From Tallahassee we traveled by truck to Miami where we boarded a C-46 (the flying cigar) and headed for Natal, Brazil. Enroute we refueled in Cuba and then flew to some airstrip out in the jungles of British Guinea. The night we spent there was an experience, sleeping under mosquito netting to keep the mosquitoes from swarming us and listening to the sounds of the birds and monkeys in the surrounding jungle. The humidity was so heavy, it was unbelievable.

The airfield at Natal was crowded with airmen coming and going to and from Africa. It was there I saw my first mental casualties of the war. In World War I they called it shell shock. In World

War II it was battle fatigue. Whatever the name, they were all hunched over and trembled continuously. Some of them were in bad shape and I couldn't help but feel sorry for them. Back home in Bellingham, I had known a fellow who came back from World War I in shell shock. He was always quivering all over and when he talked, it was all jumbled up. He never recovered from it.

The officers' mess was open twenty-four hours a day with long tables overflowing with bananas and pineapples. Much to my surprise I learned that a pineapple was white and not yellow. Whatever the color, it didn't matter. I certainly ate more than my share of both bananas and pineapples.

After three or four days at Natal, we boarded a converted B-24 and flew on to Dakar, Senegal in Africa. Both the C-46 and the B-24 were equipped with the most treacherous seats ever designed by man - a long sheet of canvas divided into individual seats. I thought then, and still do, that the individual that thought of that idea should have been hung.

We arrived in Dakar in the middle of a torrential rainstorm, which obviously had been going on for several days. I thought I was back at Shepard Field in mud up to my ankles. Our quarters were the same as those in British Guinea and Natal - tents.

A couple of days later we boarded a C-47 and started our travel north along the coastline. We stopped at several airstrips to refuel and overnight at one place while an engine was replaced. Then on to Casablanca.

Casablanca was a memorable place for we stayed overnight in one of the better hotels. The room was nice and the view from the balcony was terrific with a full moon and just the right temperature breeze gently swaying the palm trees. All I needed was Mac.

The next morning we were back on the C-47 and on our way to a base near Constantine, Algeria.

Upon arrival we were informed, much to our dismay that we were going to transition into the P-

38. P-40's were being phased out and P-51's had not yet arrived in Africa. What an indignant group of pilots we were. Single engine fighter pilots going to fly that two engine monster - the P-38? Unbelievable! How could the military do such a dastardly deed? Needless to say, we had no voice in the matter, so training began. After many hours sitting in the cockpit reading and rereading the Pilot's Handbook, and learning where each lever and switch was and its use, the time had finally come to take the "monster" off.

My first reaction, when I started to taxi, was that I could actually see where I was going. No zigging or zagging as in the P-40 and the P-5l - just taxing straight ahead. It would have been nice if the designers of the P-40 and P-5l had thought about tricycle landing gear when they designed those aircraft.

As I lined up for takeoff, I was surprised by the power of the two engines when I applied takeoff power. The aircraft shuttered and vibrated as though it couldn't wait for me to release the brakes and start the takeoff roll. The takeoff was nice and uneventful, but I was thoroughly impressed by the sudden jerk backwards as I released the brakes - lots of power in those engines.

I headed out toward the transition area and all was going well. Suddenly it happened - the left engine quit. I thought, "Not again! Will I have to set this one down on a sand dune; I increased the power on the right engine and tried to restart the left one to no avail. Yes, I switched fuel tanks. The only thing to do was to feather the prop to prevent wind milling and call the tower for emergency landing instructions. While doing this, I checked the altimeter and couldn't believe what I saw. I was flying on one engine and still holding altitude. What a pleasant surprise!

During the various briefings and classes, much emphasis had been placed on one essential rule. Never turn into a dead engine. But if you must, make it a shallow turn with lots of power on the good engine. I elected to make the turn and must have covered ten to twelve miles in the process. It was going to be a shallow turn and so it was.

I lined up with the runway so far out I must have looked like a speck on the horizon. This time I was going to get organized and land that plane like it should be landed - on all three wheels. The

touchdown was as smooth as silk and I rolled to the end of the runway. As I was being towed back to the flight line I thought, "Maybe this isn't such a monster after all."

My training continued as scheduled even though other abnormal events occurred - the frequent shots at night at would-be Arab thieves and the twenty-four hour continuous chanting in the nearby Arab village as they mourned their dead. Extremely nerve-wrecking! There was another thing we thought to be quite different. It involved French pilots flying the P-39 (Aircobra). The P-39 was notorious for its lack of glide ratio. Like the P-40, when power was cut, it dropped like a rock. The French pilots couldn't seem to understand that critical fact so all too many of them ended up in a heap at the approach end of the runway. Trying to stretch the glide was like committing suicide. Strange? The French had another quirk. They didn't believe in wearing parachutes and did so only after being ordered to do so.

Another incident took place that would have been comical had it not been so deadly. It seems that a cook who had over-indulged on vanilla extract somehow got into a small light plane and took off. We on the ground stood in amazement as he performed maneuvers and aerobatics which had never been seen before by man, all so close to the ground he sent men scurrying for shelter. The base commander had seen enough of that - he ordered two P-38's be loaded with live ammunition to shoot the little plane down. The P-38's never made it airborne. A few minutes later the little plane went into a spin and spun into eternity.

We lost one of our group when he apparently had oxygen problems while airborne and passed out. His funeral was a very sobering event, but it was a lesson to us all - make frequent checks to ensure the oxygen system is functioning correctly. Years later I attended a high altitude test chamber. The purpose of the test was to experience the effect of oxygen depletion. Those of us attending were given a writing pad and pencil. Then we entered the chamber. The air was pumped out to represent thirty- to forty-thousand foot altitude. In a few seconds 1 heard a buzzing noise, which increased in intensity as the seconds went by. Writing was impossible. There was no way 1 could get the pencil to go where I wanted it to go. It was an excellent test and had it been available years earlier, it might have saved my friend's life.

The land around Constantine was very barren as it was on the outer edge of the Sahara Desert. Very similar to our southwestern states. The relics of war were made evident by wrecked tanks and trucks scattered here and there.

Constantine itself was a large city populated by Arabs and Frenchmen. The center section was very modem with a supermarket and other nice stores. A block or two from the city center was a completely different world. It was very primitive to say the least. But I guess the most memorable thing about the city was the noise of the honking horns. It seemed like the car that had the loudest horn had the right of way.

There was another thing about Constantine that was certainly different. There was a long bridge over a very deep (I would guess several hundred feet) ravine near the city center. It was the favorite spot to dump Americans after robbing them. Because of these incidents, the city was soon put off limits, so that ended that.

Upon completion of training, we were loaded into the bomb bay of a B-17 and headed for our new assignment. I don't know if the pilot was trying to impress us fighter pilots, but he surely did. He flew that bomber like it was a fighter. 1 was thoroughly impressed with the pilot's flying talent and with the B-17's maneuverability.

At our new home I was assigned to the 49th Fighter Squadron of the 14th Fighter Group, located near Tunis. The stay there was very short, however. A week or so later the entire group was transferred to Foggia, Italy. A few practice dive-bombing flights along with formation flying was about all we had time for.

We had traveled by convoy to the outskirts of Bizerte, where we bivouacked on a hillside with our pup tents and gear. It must have been the rainy season for it seemed that each night a giant size thunderstorm passed overhead. The result was mud and more mud. Really not too comfortable sleeping on the ground. The field kitchen food wasn't the greatest either.

After four or five days in Bizerte, we boarded an L.S.T. (Landing-Ship-Tank) and headed across

the Mediterranean Sea. Two things happened which impressed me. First was the excellent food served on board: fresh vegetables, real milk and eggs, and everything else, including fresh meat and ice cream. One thing I'll say about the Navy - they sure ate well.

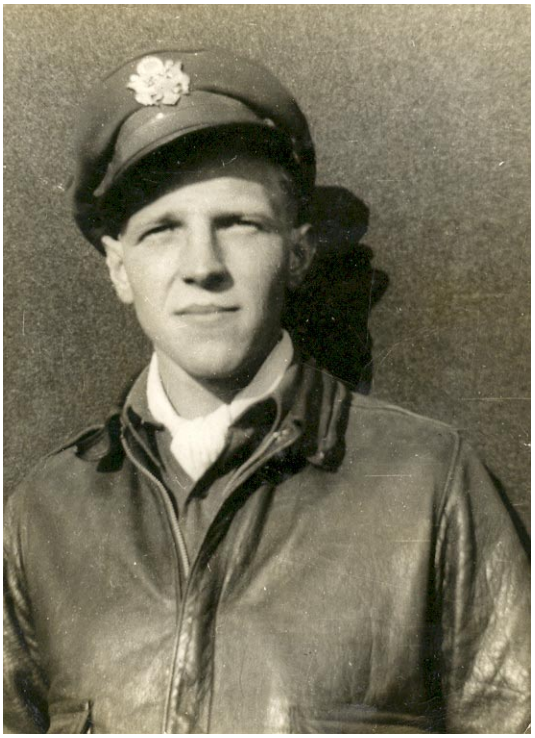
The second thing was an attack by a German U Boat on several ships up toward the head of the convoy. All pilots were immediately ordered "topside" with life jackets on and secured. A U.S. destroyer firing depth charges was about three hundred yards off our left side. What a beautiful sight to watch! The sea was fairly calm, so the destroyer left a long wave as it maneuvered in a circle and what appeared to be figure eights. It was like watching- a professional ice skater create figures on ice and all so gracefully. As it maneuvered, it continued dropping depth charges every five to ten seconds. As the charges exploded geysers of water would shoot high in the air. It was just like Old Faithful shooting water to its maximum height every few seconds. I couldn't help but admire the sailors on that ship. Had it not been for those two appendix operations in 1940, I could possibly have been on that very ship.

As we neared the Naples dock, I got my first sight of the ravages of war and the terrible effect it had on civilians. We were greeted by perhaps a hundred small boats, rafts and anything else that would float. Each one was occupied by boys and girls. The boys begged for food and cigarettes and the girls were willing (begging is a better word) to sell their bodies for a slice of bread or a pack of cigarettes. I tried to rationalize by thinking the Italians were getting their just rewards, but there was no escaping the fact that these young kids had no part in creating Mussolini's Italy.

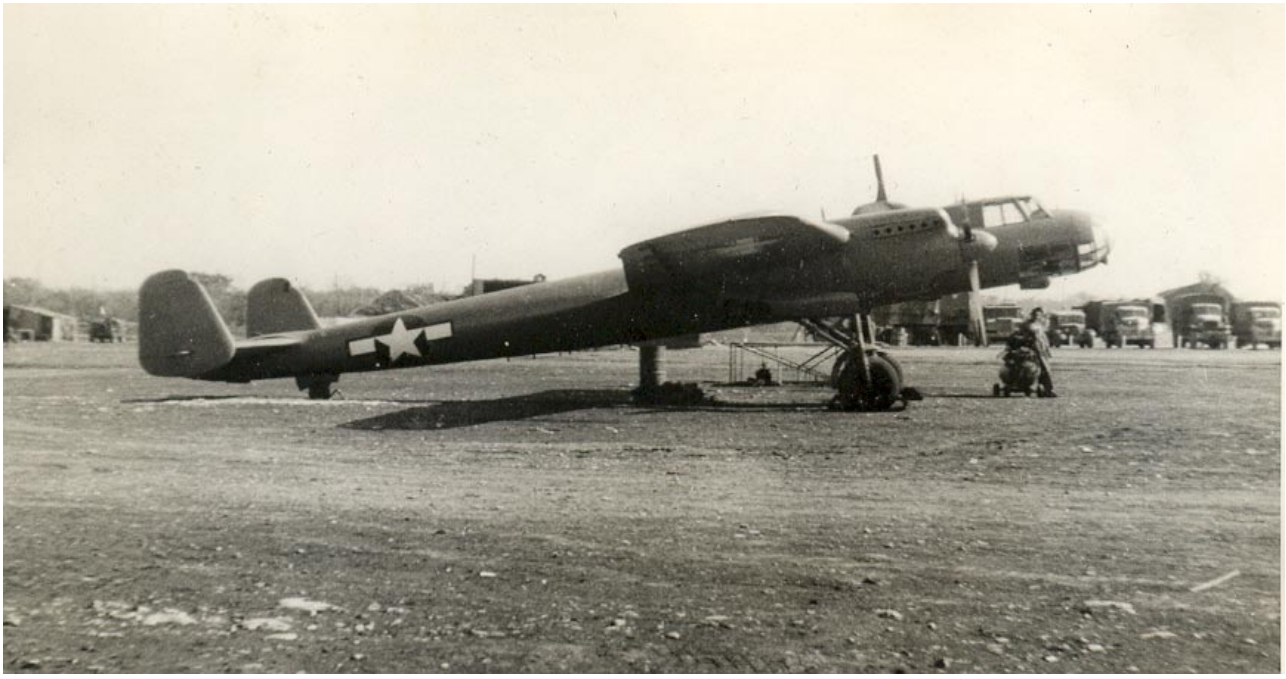
Foggia, Italy - Spring of 1944

We were quartered in a bombed out hotel on the outskirts of Naples for about a week. Again, the horrors of war were evident, especially at each meal. A long line of Italians would line up next to the garbage cans and as each man came by with his tray, the first in line would scrape the remaining food off into a can or a pot or whatever would hold food. Needless to say, very little food reached the garbage cans. Also, it seemed that every American had lost his appetite because most trays were usually almost nearly full as men headed for the first garbage can. Also, quite often a pack of cigarettes or a chocolate bar would inadvertently be left on the tray. This was certainly a tribute to American compassion and generosity - especially so, considering the fact that helping the civilians was severely frowned upon by the military brass.

Foggia, Italy – Spring 1944



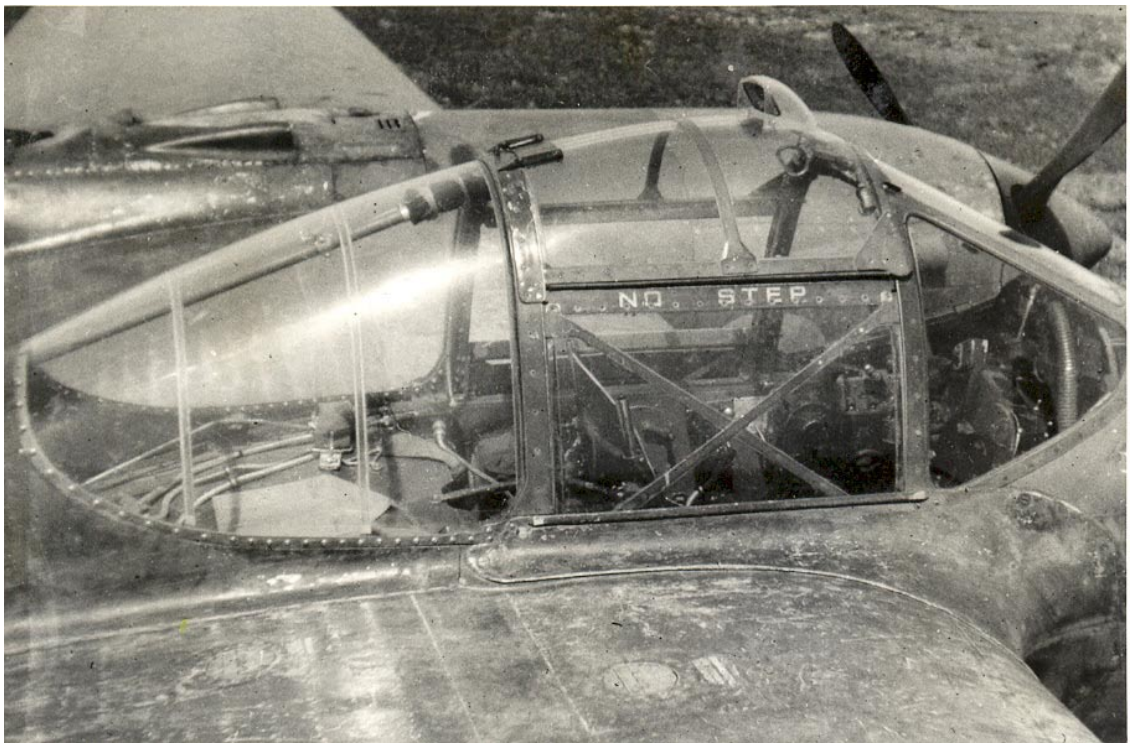
Tent Mates and Home Away From Home, Foggia, Italy

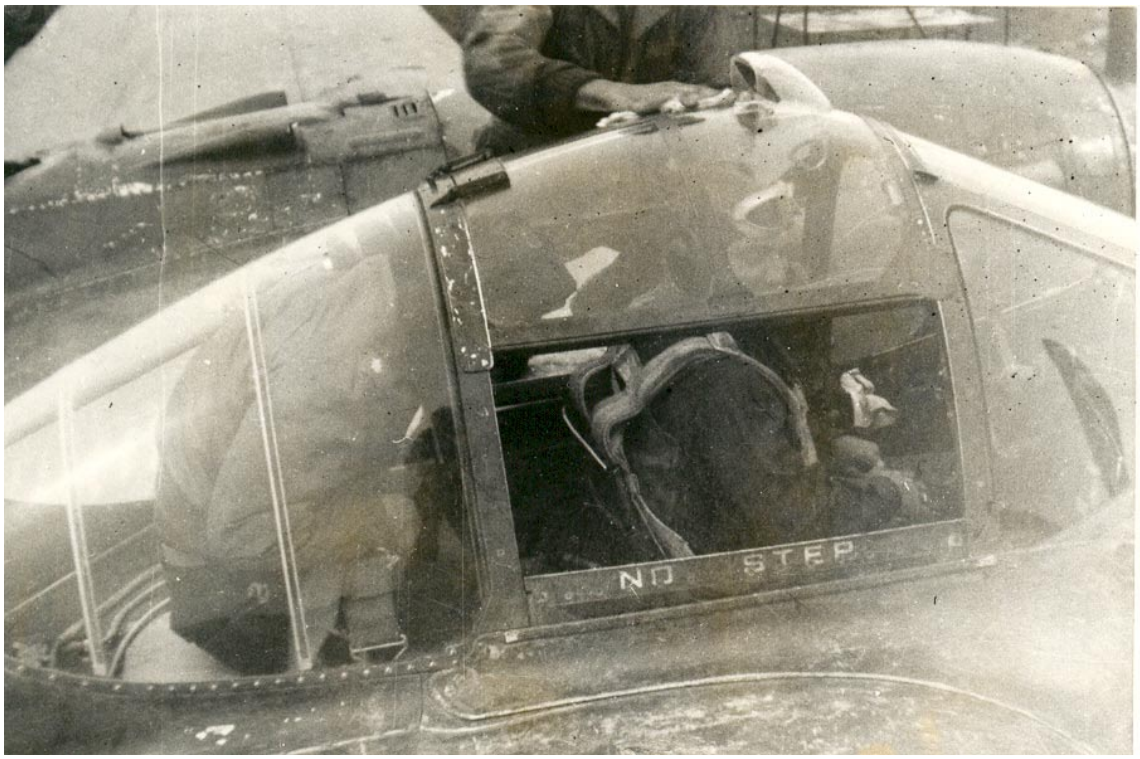


Dernier 217

49th Fighter Squadron, 14th fighter Group - Foggia, Italy

Shower Facility



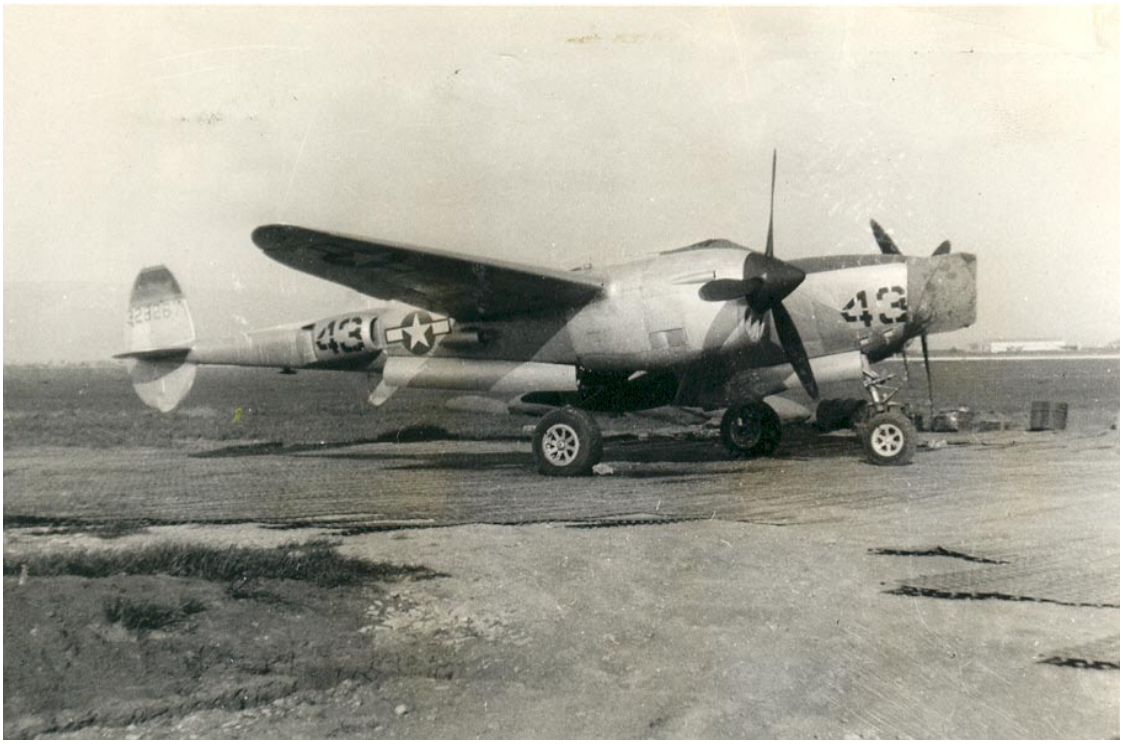


"Piggy Back" P-38 "With Passenger"

End of the Line for a JU-88 German Light Bomber

German ME-109

German ME-109



P-38

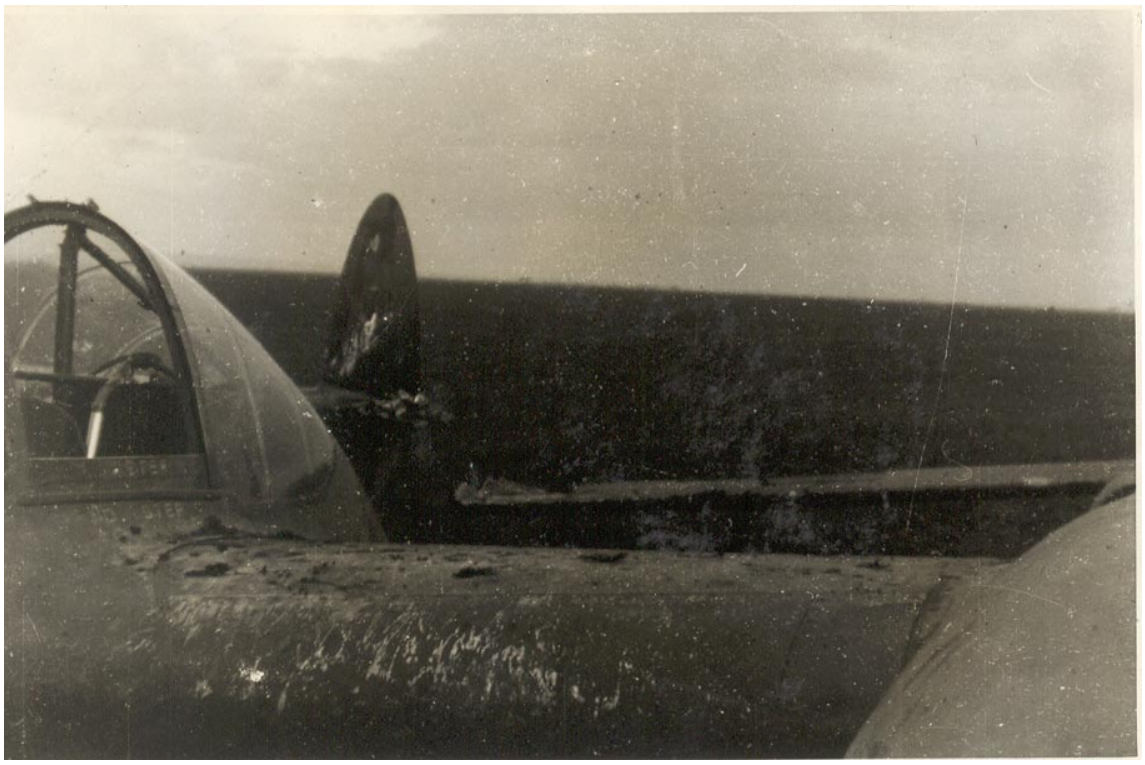
P-38

P-38

B-25 – A General's Personal Airplane

P-38 Re-Fueling

P-38 In-Flight



P-38 Battle Damage

P-38 Hard Landing

From Naples we moved east to the Foggia Valley. The airstrip was approximately six to seven miles east of Foggia. Foggia had been badly damaged by U.S. bombers so it was pretty much a mess with sewage lines broken and building rubble all around.

The airstrip had been used by both the Italians and the Germans. It had been liberated just a few days prior to our arrival. The front was ten to twelve miles north of us so we could hear artillery and see reflections at night. I couldn't help but think about the soldiers up there while falling asleep on my air mattress in a heated tent.

Speaking of heated tents, our stoves were makeshift affairs fueled by one hundred-octane aircraft gas. It wasn't too unusual to hear a stove explode and see a tent burst into flames, but they sure put out the heat.

But all our time was not spent fighting the war. It seemed like something was going on daily

either on the base or in Foggia. The U.S.A. in Foggia was a popular place for soft drinks and gathering around a piano and singing. There seemed to be no shortage of G.I.'s with great playing talent. "Lady Be Good" and "The Indian Love Call" were among the most popular songs, along with Glen Miller music. I also had the privilege of attending a U.S.A. show featuring Irving Berlin. It was truly a great show, pretty much as has been shown many times on TV.

A frequent visitor to the base was the Red Cross truck providing soft drinks and doughnuts. Comedian Joe E. Brown accompanied one such visit and provided us many laughs.

Downtown Foggia

Chapter III

My first combat mission was a bomber escort flight to northern Italy. It was completely uneventful - no enemy fighters very little flak - just like a Sunday afternoon flight. However, the tranquility of the homeward flight was suddenly interrupted by the loss of my left engine. I had no luck on restarting, so I feathered the propeller and completed the flight to home base with no further difficulties. But on the way home I had a couple hours to think about the P-38 and its flying capabilities. As much as I hated to think it, I was getting very fond of the "monster." Again, the landing was smooth as can be. "Hangman 22 (my call sign) had completed his first mission. Upon landing I attended my first mission debriefing which included one-ounce of "mission whiskey" served by the medics. An excellent way to unwind. Twice on later missions I was to return with one engine shut down. You guessed right - the left engine each time. That one will always remain a mystery. Why always the left engine, Why not the right one if for no other reason than to break the monotony,

My next engine loss occurred near Ploesti, Rumania when the left engine developed an oil leak. It was in the middle of a "dogfight" and that was no place to be with an engine shut down.

After feathering the propeller, I turned back towards Yugoslavia. In the turn I spotted two ME-109's (Messerschmitt 109 - the best German fighter plane of the war) at my seven o'clock position about two to three miles away and perhaps three to four thousand feet below my altitude. I would not have seen them but for the momentary reflection of the sun from one of them. They spotted me about the same time I saw them. I saw them turn and head my way. As I completed my turn, there up ahead were about fifteen B-17's heading for home. I thought if I can

get underneath the B-17's, the 109's might be reluctant to get that close to the bombers. There were some tense moments as I judged their rate of closure with mine to the bombers. It was going to be close. How much longer would the right engine take full power? It looked like I was going to make it! The next problem was to keep the B-17's from shooting at me. There had been intelligence reports that captured P-38's had been known to join a flight of bombers only to open fire at the first opportunity. As I closed on the bombers I rocked my wings in every conceivable manner hoping they would get the message that I was in trouble. They did. The two ME-109's broke off a safe distance away from the effective range of the bombers' .50 caliber machine guns. The enemy pilots had a healthy respect for those tail and bottom/top turret gunners. I talked to one of the bomber pilots later and he remembered the incident. Every bomber crew in that formation was determined that the 109's were not going to shoot down their "peashooter" friend, as the bomber crews referred to us fighter pilots.

But the anxieties for the day were not over. The B-17's began a descent through an overcast, so I backed off several miles before starting mine. I uncaged the artificial horizon (a gyro operated instrument showing the attitude of flight) and began the descent. After a few minutes the seat of my pants told me something was wrong. The artificial horizon indicated I was in a slight descent with wings level. My seat told me otherwise. A quick crosscheck of the needle and ball, the magnetic compass and the altimeter told me I was in a tight downward spiral about to enter a spin. I quickly recovered and continued the descent without further problems. I broke out of the overcast over the Adriatic Sea coastline of Yugoslavia. A good lesson I learned during instrument flying conditions was not to rely on one instrument, in this case a faulty artificial horizon. Continuous cross checking of all flight attitude instruments was an absolute necessity.

As I flew across the Adriatic Sea it seemed like it was taking a long time to cross it. I wasn't too sure of my position or if I was on the right heading so I contacted "Jackstraw." Jackstraw was a Direction Finding (DF) system set up in Italy for aircraft assistance. The system was composed of three radio stations set up in a triangle approximately seventy-five to one hundred miles apart on each side. When a pilot requested a "fix" he would, upon making radio contact, transmit for ten to fifteen seconds by talking, singing, or whatever - as long as he was transmitting some type of signal. The three stations could then determine his azimuth from that station. By drawing the

three azimuths on a map, a fairly accurate position could be given to the pilot along with a heading to his home base or where ever the pilot wanted to go. I received my "fix" with about a ten-degree heading change and soon I was over the Italian coastline heading for home plate.

Speaking of Direction Finding, an event occurred that will always remain a mystery to me. A pilot got separated from his squadron near Rome and started home on his own. He finally contacted one station but his transmissions were so weak only one station could pick him up and that station tried to contact him. His last known position was somewhere over the Mediterranean Sea on a southwesterly course. That course would have taken him to Africa if he had enough fuel, which he didn't. So, he ran out of fuel somewhere over the Mediterranean Sea. We could only speculate as to what may have happened. Perhaps he became disoriented or perhaps other factors were involved leading him to believe he was over the Adriatic Sea or, possibly he was relying on a faulty radio compass and not crosschecking with his magnetic compass. Whatever the reason he was never seen or heard from again.

My next engine out experience occurred over the Anzio Beachhead. There were a few enemy fighters in the air and bullets were flying here and there. Apparently a stray one struck my left engine supercharger and it disintegrated in an instant. The supercharger was about a two foot round metal disk with fin-like protrusions on its outer edge. Its purpose was to force air into the carburetor at high altitudes. There was no problem getting out of the combat area for I simply had to dive while heading out to sea. After I landed, a check of the vertical stabilizers and the rudders showed numerous holes. Pieces of the supercharger fins had penetrated at the speed of bullets.

My first encounter with enemy fire came during a dive-bombing mission just north of Cassino, Italy. The Germans were holding the Americans at bay because of the heavily defended monastery on top of Mt. Cassino. Our mission was to destroy a bridge over which German reinforcements and supplies were being transported to Cassino. We lined up and began the "peel off" into the dive for the bomb drop. Just after I lined up the bridge in my sights, I began firing the .50 caliber machine guns and the 20mm cannon. As I watched the traces speed towards the bridge, I noticed something else - the flashing of lights on the ground. They reminded me of

Christmas lights blinking on and off. But those were not lights - they were guns shooting at me. That's really the first time I thought, "A guy could get hurt doing this kind of work!"

Perhaps now would be a good time to try to describe a mission and a dogfight and what it entailed. Most escort missions were about six hours long with fuel for about seven hours and so we often came home on fumes. Several aircraft had to land at an advanced base. They did not have sufficient fuel to fly another fifty to sixty miles. We were all hurting for fuel.

A dogfight was just about what the name implies an air full of friendly and enemy fighters desperately trying to shoot each other down. It entailed many maximum turn rates (called "breaks") with accompanying blackouts. Blackouts were caused by G forces forcing the blood from the brain down towards the seat of the pants and the feet causing temporary blindness. The only remedy was to ease forward on the wheel and, by doing so, ease the G force. I would guess a pilot would be blacked-out about five percent of the time in a dogfight.

In the P-38, throttles, RPM levers and fuel mixture levers were on the left side of the cockpit and controlled by the left hand. The throttles had a stop so only military power was available. However, there was a lever that could be released to allow the throttles to move to emergency power. Emergency power was seldom used except in a dogfight and then used only for short periods of time measured in seconds. The engines could not sustain that power for more than a few seconds at a time.

The flap lever was on the right side of the cockpit with combat flaps integrated into the flap lever. Combat flaps were approximately thirty to thirty-five degrees of the full flap position. Their purpose was to increase the rate of turn or, in other words, reduce the turn ratio. The combat flaps played a major role during a dogfight since the aircraft that could make the tightest turn had a distinct advantage over his opponent.

The engine instruments played an important role. Each gauge had a "green" line and a "red" line to the right of it. As long as the needle was "in the green" all was well. The needle moving into the red zone meant something wasn't exactly right. It could be just a temporary reading,

especially in a dogfight, and return to normal once the battle was over. If the needle stayed in the red, then a search began as to its cause. If the cause could not be identified and the needle continued to climb in the red, then engine shutdown would be necessary. Engine shutdown would occur only out of the battle zone if at all possible.

During a dogfight there was a constant changing of hands on the wheel-working the throttles and RPM levers with the left hand while holding the wheel with the right hand, or holding the wheel with the left hand while working the combat flaps with the right hand - constantly shifting the hands back and forth as needed.

A dogfight would go something like this: Squadron leader, "Bandits at nine o'clock high. Drop belly tanks."

Switch to main tanks - drop tanks, fuel mixture to "rich" - increase engine RPM - push throttles forward to increased manifold pressure and engine power - turn gun sight, gun switch and camera to on position.

"Element leader calls "Break left!"

"Hard left turn - blacking out - ease wheel forward - change hands on wheel to get combat flaps down - blacking out - ease wheel forward - change hands - rolling out - change hands- combat flaps up - changing hands - back-off on throttle. In steep climb - firewall throttles leveling off - throttles back.

"Element leader, "Two bandits at two o'clock!"

Right turn to meet bandits head on. Element leader firing - bandits firing. I see tracers of leader and bandits. One bandit explodes in a huge ball of smoke and flames. As the second bandit rolls over and heads for earth.

I call element leader, "Bandits coming in at five o'clock."

Element leader makes hard right turn. Blacking out - ease wheel forward - push throttles forward - bandits pass to right - element leader in pursuit - push throttles to max. - Overtaking leader back on throttles - kick right rudder to "sideslip" aircraft, to quickly reduce speed. Element leader makes hard left turn - change hands - combat flaps down - add power - blacking out - ease off on wheel - rolling out - combat flaps up - change hands - throttles back - and on and on until the dogfight is over. All during the dogfight a quick check of the instruments is made and a constant check of the airspace, three hundred and sixty degrees up and down, looking for enemy aircraft.

The constant maneuvering of the earlier P-38 models, without hydraulic control, was a very tiring exercise. It certainly built strong arm and shoulder muscles. Later models with hydraulic controls were much easier to maneuver. No or very little physical effort was required to move the controls.

I hope the above gives you a general idea of a dogfight. But just to complicate matters, all of the dog fighting is done while flying formation. As the element leader's wingman (tail-end Charlie), my position was seventy-five to one hundred feet to the right and behind the element leader. So while all the action was taking place, I had to exercise extreme care to avoid colliding with his plane. We had one such accident at Foggia when a wingman collided with his leader cutting both booms off of the leaders aircraft. Both planes crashed and burned adjacent to the runway. Again another lesson - pay attention to what you are doing.

I was credited with one enemy aircraft destroyed on another Ploesti bomber escort mission. On that day the Germans put everything into the air that even looked like it had wings. In my case it was an Italian fighter similar to the ME-109. He was at my one-thirty position heading towards my seven-thirty position and couldn't have been more than a half-mile away. I don't know what he was thinking about because I don't think he ever saw me. Possibly, he was concentrating on something I couldn't see. Whatever the reason, he gave me perfect lead and I pressed the trigger. I could see the tracers heading toward his propeller hub and then a big puff of black smoke burst from his engine. He disappeared in a cloud of smoke. I broke off and joined the rest of the squadron well satisfied that I had earned my keep on that mission.

Upon landing, my wingman confirmed what I had seen. He had watched the smoking aircraft hit the ground. I asked if he had seen the pilot bailout and his answer was, "No, he went in with the plane."

I felt bad about that and still do as a matter of fact. Aerial combat was completely different from ground combat where it was man versus man. In the air it was machine versus machine. You shot down the enemy machine or he shot down your machine. It was that simple, with little or no thought given to the fact that men were in those machines. Group Intelligence confirmed that the aircraft was an Italian Reggiane RE-2005 that I had shot down.

NAME	RK	SERIAL	UNIT	ECH	THEATER	CR	DATE	POS	TYPE	ENEMY	US	ORDER	WAR
JULE WESLEY L	2LT	AO01703109	49FTR	SQ	MTO	1	440507	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WW2

World War II Victory Credits Showing "CR - 1"

There was one other mission that is etched in my memory. Again, it was a bomber escort mission where we were jumped by German fighters. I was flying "Tail-end Charlie." My job was to keep a close watch for any enemy fighters that may try to attack from the rear. The element leader and I became separated from the rest of the squadron in pursuit of a couple 109's. At one point during the wild maneuvering some objects began hitting my windshield. They were spent cartridges from my element leader's guns. That we were going straight up came as a complete surprise to me. I was so busy staying in formation with him that I had no knowledge of what position we were in.

Immediately after that encounter, we saw two B-17's about five miles away with two ME-109's above and to their rear. They were obviously setting up for a pass at the bombers. The element leader said, "Let's get' em!"

We fire walled the throttles and headed their way. If we could get there before they made their pass, maybe we could make them change their minds. It was not to be. We were about a mile away when they made their pass and both B-17's went down. One was on fire and the other appeared to be okay but both aircraft went into a slow motion spin. We watched as both aircraft went in with no parachutes to be seen. What a shame. So near to saving twenty lives but just not enough speed to make that one crucial mile. That was a sad day. Even though we had tried, it was not much consolation. Just another thirty seconds or so was all that we needed, but as I said before, it was not to be.

Chapter IV

The government was true to its word, so on 29 April 1944 I was commissioned a second lieutenant. Another step towards making my dream a reality. Now, if I could just stay alive!

After my promotion, I experienced my first strafing mission, an airfield in northern Italy, near Venice. It was a very tiring flight. While flying for two hours at about fifteen feet above the Adriatic Sea, we had to exercise extreme care to remain in formation and still maintain adequate height above the water. One pilot didn't. He cartwheeled when he hit the water and immediately disappeared. As we neared the target on a northbound heading, we spread out abreast with about thirty feet separation between aircraft. The enemy was not expecting us, so our first sweep was uneventful, other than the squadron leader shooting down a JU-88 German light bomber as it was on its final approach for landing. The occupants never knew what hit them. One second they were airborne and the next second they were just several hundred feet of burning rubble.

We began firing at anything in our line of flight. If there was not a specific target we "fishtailed" the aircraft to provide a wider area of bullet placement - much like using a wrist motion with a hose when watering flowers.

There were three squadrons (forty-eight aircraft) involved with this mission, so it took several minutes for all of us to make our run.

As the last aircraft cleared the target area, we made our turn southward for our second pass. This time the enemy was waiting for us. We had just reached the field boundary when the antiaircraft shells began exploding all around us at our exact altitude of no more than thirty or forty feet. Their accuracy was uncanny. Several shells exploded at my ten o'clock position near the aircraft to my left. He immediately made a hard left turn and I made a hard turn to the right. I never saw him again. At the mission debriefing the flight behind us reported they had seen him hit the ground and crash into some trees. I don't know if the burst of shells hit him or ground machine

gun fire got him. Whatever it was, he was gone and it was a sad day for the squadron. He was a real likable person who was getting close to the magic number of 50 missions – going home time.

It was about that time that P-51's began escort duty. The P-38's would take the bombers to the target and the P-51's would escort them home. Naturally the P-51's pilots wanted to "play" with the P-38's, if for no other reason than to compare the performance of each aircraft. This play was extremely hazardous, especially if the P-51 was making a head-on pass in a combat area. At closing speeds of six to seven hundred miles per hour, the P-38 pilot was not going to sit there wondering if head-on traffic was friend or foe. It was a matter of shooting first and asking questions later. After several P-51's were shot down by friendly fire, they soon got the message: Don't ever make a head-on pass at a P-38 in a combat zone.

The most perplexing events that occurred were the complete disappearance of aircraft while flying in formation. An aircraft would be there one second and disappear the next second, never to be seen or heard of again. During mission debriefings, the question was always asked, “Does anyone know what happened to so-and-so?" Nothing but negative replies. How they could vanish without someone seeing them will forever remain a mystery. One such incident involved a visiting full colonel wanting to get at least one mission to his credit. He was flying the squadron leader's wing when enemy fighters appeared. On the very first hard turn he disappeared, completely vanished. Needless to say the group commander wasn't too pleased about that.

On 14 June 1944, on my twenty-eighth mission, we attended the normal pre-mission briefing getting the target information, bomber rendezvous point, altitude, and so on. It was to be a B-24 escort mission near Budapest, Hungary, with a railroad yard as the target. Bombing altitude was to be twenty-five thousand feet, which meant that we would be at twenty-seven thousand feet during the mission. Intelligence wise, the bombers could expect heavy anti-aircraft flak. The intelligence officer went on to say that should any of us get into trouble and have to bailout, intelligence sources believed that many of the peasants would be friendly to Americans. Little did I know that within a few hours I would be remembering his words. As sort of an

afterthought, he added that we could expect a few ME-109's in the target area.

After our briefing, the squadron took off, joined the bombers and proceeded on toward the target. As the bombers began their bomb run, we broke off and started to circle around to pick them up as they exited the target area. The intelligence officer was right about the heavy flak. There was one huge black cloud over the target and my heart went out to the bomber crews as they flew into and disappeared in the cloud.

All was going well when the squadron leader called, "Drop belly tanks!" and none too soon at that. The ME-109's were on us like a swarm of mad hornets, yellow nose hornets. The Yellow Nose 109's were flown by the elite pilots of the German Air Force.

What followed is difficult to describe: aircraft going in all different directions, up, down, sideways and in every conceivable state of flight. Thus it was with the P-38's and the ME-109's. A P-38 going down over there trailing smoke, a 109 disintegrating over there and another just a black smokey streak in the sky. Another P-38 going down in a spin, flying through aircraft debris with spent shell casings battering the windshield along with black engine oil. Even when we went into the Luftbury maneuver it didn't seem to help. The Luftbury was a tactic where four aircraft would form into a rather small circle so at least one in the flight could see an enemy aircraft on the attack. It was something like circling the wagons for Indian attacks.

Then I saw him: An ME-109 at about the ten o'clock position passing from left to right. I thought to myself, "If I just level my wings I should have about the right lead and a short burst should do it."

I was right about part of it. I leveled the wing and it looked like a perfect shot in my sights. I pressed the trigger. Just as the guns began firing and it looked like the tracers were finding their target, I felt the sickening thud and the aircraft shuttered as enemy bullets found their way to their target - me! I quickly looked in the rear view mirror. There was a 109 so close to my tail that his nose cannon looked like a six-incher belching fire. I immediately made a hard left turn hoping to return to the Luftbury, but that was not to be. My left engine was on fire back to the tail and my right engine was spewing oil and coolant back to the tail. I told myself, "Jule, you're in trouble!"

The textbook theory on a bailout was to put the aircraft in a level or slight climb configuration then slide down the wing and go under the horizontal stabilizer. Well, I couldn't go out the left side because of the flames and I had no desire to be boiled by the oil and coolant by going out the right side. There was only one thing to do - make a quick half roll and, once the plane was upside down, just simply fall out. I jettisoned the canopy and was just beginning the roll when it

seemed like the whole cockpit exploded and as if someone had dumped a load of dirt into my eyes blinding me. After numerous blinks, the dirt washed out enough that I could see the remains of the cockpit. I'm sure everyone has seen cartoons where some piece of sophisticated equipment has blown up and various gauges and dials are dangling back and forth on spring-like wires. That's the way the instrument panel looked at first glance. Then I saw the gaping hole dead center of the instrument panel where the cannon shell had hit. I thought how funny it looked. One second it was a nice orderly panel and the next second it was a complete disaster area. But there was no time to dwell on that. I had to get out and get out quickly.

"All right, I'll try it again," I thought as I started the roll. Just as the wingtips reached the vertical position one of two things, or possibly both, happened. Either the left (bottom) engine quit or the controls were shot off. I think both happened simultaneously because the aircraft suddenly cart wheeled tail over the nose with the wingtips still vertical. I would guess I cart wheeled three times before going into a vertical, slow spinning dive.

As the dive straightened out, I pulled back on the wheel to level out, but there was absolutely nothing there. No pressure, no nothing "Jule, you're in real trouble now!" I was talking to myself telling myself what I should do and how to do it. "I've got to get out of this thing in a vertical dive? Wonder if anyone has tried it and lived to tell about it? I'll simply stand up and the airflow should pull me out. I wonder if I'll clear the horizontal stabilizer? Wonder if the 'chute will open? Don't worry about that now. You have to get out first. Got to get home to Mac! OK, a couple quick breaths of pure oxygen and then I'm ready!"

I had gotten halfway out when the airflow pinned my arms back and the parachute got hung up on something. The airflow was so strong it was difficult to get my arms back into the cockpit so I could grasp the wheel and pull the rest of me back in.

"Well, that didn't work! Wonder how much altitude I have left? Hope this thing doesn't blow up before I can get out! I've got to try something else if I'm going to see Mac again! I've got to get out some way! Now, if I can raise myself high enough to get my feet on the seat and grasp the top of the windshield, I should be able to give a lunge up and forward and clear the seat. Hope I

miss the stabilizer. All set, a few more gulps of oxygen - got to see Mac again!"

A leap forward and up and I was out of the cockpit like a cork out of a warm champagne bottle, spinning head over heels. I have no idea how many somersaults I made, but I wasn't keeping a count anyway. I caught a glimpse of the horizontal stabilizer. It passed within a few inches of my head as I flew over the top. That was my last sight of the plane. "Boy! That was close!" "Wonder if I'll ever stop spinning?"

As the spinning eased off, I began thinking about the intelligence report of enemy aircraft strafing men in parachutes. "Better free-fall for a bit and, also, get down to a lower altitude for more oxygen."

I don't know how many thousands of feet I fell but seemed like an awfully long time. "OK, this is it! Pull the rip cord and hope the chute opens." What a jolt it was, but what a most wonderful jolt!

Was I scared? Not really. There was no time for that. I knew I was in a very precarious and life threatening situation, but I never even thought of the possibility that I just might not make it. I had to - there was no other choice. I had to see Mac again! •

• Wes told his son Bob, that he was flying a P-38 named “The Lucky Leprechaun” not “Mac” when he was shot down.
Military Form WD AGO Form 53-98 indicates “Wounds Received in Action: Petfurdo, Jungary 14 June 1944”

Chapter V

After the 'chute opened the first thing that impressed me was the absolute quiet. Where did the war go? No aircraft engines, no shellfire, not even the sound of a breeze as I descended. I was thinking it sure would be great if I could spend the rest of the day up there where it is peaceful and quiet when I saw the ME-109. He was about a half-mile away heading in my direction. I sure hoped he was not one of those pilots who believed chivalry in combat was dead. If he did then I was dead. If he didn't shoot first, I could at least wave at him as he flew to signify that I thought he had done an excellent job. He passed close enough that I could see him as I waved. No response. He made a tight left turn around me and then another. As he passed the third time, I waved again and this time he responded with a wave, rocked his wings, peeled off to the right and quickly disappeared.

By this time my left upper arm and shoulder were getting sore. They should have been. The left arm of my flying suit was saturated in blood from the elbow to the shoulder. I wondered how bad it was. The flying suit looked like the moths had been having a feast. I felt my arm and shoulder and was relieved to find no holes and, even though sore, I could move them with ease. I stuffed my handkerchief inside my suit hoping it would stop the flow of blood or at least slow it down. I also took my pilot's scarf and wrapped it around my arm as tight as I could. Maybe that would do until I got on the ground. Then I saw a puddle of blood forming on my lap. It was coming from my eyebrows, nose and chin. Perhaps the most difficult thing I have ever done in my life was to take my hand and place it on my head and move it around, back and forth. There had to be something missing. Several times I repeated the gesture, but everything seemed to be there. "Nothing missing, so maybe it's not as bad as it looks," I told myself.

I saw that I was rapidly gaining on the earth and, from my point of view; it appeared to be solid forest with a few open spots here and there. I pulled and tugged at the parachute shrouds trying to guide the 'chute to an open area. That turned out to be a lost cause - and it looked so easy in the movies!

As I neared the ground it became certain that I was going to land in the trees. Instinctively I held

my legs tightly together as I had no desire to end up being turned into a "she" as I went through the branches. I went crashing through the limbs and thank goodness they were limber as well as small. I came to an abrupt stop with my feet a few inches above the ground. I looked up to see what had happened and there was my 'chute neatly draped over the top of a pine tree. Unbelievable! I had survived and I was almost on solid ground.

After the war, I learned later that several of the squadron pilots had seen me go down. They reported to the debriefing officer that my plane was last seen in a vertical dive, on fire and rapidly disintegrating with no parachute in sight. This information was pretty much as the commander's letter to my family indicated, except he added that there was little hope of my survival.

I quickly unbuckled the parachute harness and found the medical kit and the escape kit. I tore open the medical kit looking for sulfa powder or ointment, but someone had been there before me. At least the morphine and bandages were still there, so I shoved them in my pocket. The escape kit contained a compass, some silk maps, thirty dollars in American money, and a rubber coated hacksaw blade about four inches long. All that, too, quickly disappeared into a pocket except for the compass. A quick glance at it to locate south and then I ran fast. I estimated I was about two hundred miles from the Swiss border, which at that moment might as well have been half way around the world.

As I ran through the woods, which had no undergrowth or brush, I saw many deer nonchalantly grazing. They would raise their heads and look at me for a few seconds and then go back to grazing. What a tranquil picture in contrast to what I was going through at that moment. I ran for what seemed like miles, stopping occasionally to check the compass and make sure I was still heading south.

Eventually I came to a railroad bridge over a small gully. I got under the bridge to check my injuries and to put on some bandages. My upper arm and shoulder looked like I had been hit by a shotgun blast. It was getting to be quite sore, but at least the bleeding had stopped. Now, what to do? A look at the maps didn't help me. There were many railroads indicated, but I really had no

idea where I was. All I knew was that I was somewhere in Hungary. I also needed to hide the maps and the money, but, more importantly, what to do with my wife's ring? The answer to the maps and money was relatively easy. I pried up the insoles of my G.I. shoes and slipped the maps in one shoe and the money in the other. But what to do with the ring? I took off my left shoe and sock and slipped the ring on my little toe. The rubber covered hacksaw blade was something else. The idea was ingenious to say the least. Hide it in an inconspicuous place specifically, the rectum. Well, I really didn't need that, so into a pocket it went. I was ready to travel again.

As I alternately walked and ran, I came to a dirt road that was more of a firebreak than a road, but it headed south. By this time I was getting tired, I had already had to stop several times to get my breath. I thought I would walk on the road for a while. It would be much easier than running through the woods.

As I walked along, I heard something like a cart creaking behind me. I quickly hid behind some trees. I waited but couldn't see anything. A few minutes later a cart emerged from the woods and started in my direction. On it was an elderly gray haired man. He was driving a horse drawn, wooden wheeled cart with a load of firewood on the back. I remembered the intelligence officer's words that the peasants might be friendly. I had no idea what a peasant looked like, but thought if there ever was a peasant, this man must be one. The big question remained should I stop him or wait for perhaps something better later on? What to do? By this time my arm and shoulder were really getting sore and stiff. When I had checked the wounds earlier I couldn't feel any shrapnel, so obviously they had penetrated quite deep. What I needed was a doctor, not blood poisoning.

As he came closer I was astounded by the fact that he could have been my grandfather's twin. Maybe my luck was still holding. Finding a peasant and my grandfather's twin, too. That was about as good an omen as I could expect, so I stepped out onto the road.

The cart came to an abrupt halt. I must have really frightened the man. He threw his arms up and had a never-so-scared look on his face. Thinking about it later, I could understand what a shock it must have been for him. To be quietly moving along on his wagon in a most serene

environment and be suddenly accosted by a blood smeared individual of unknown origin.

I held out my hands to show him I was not armed. That was the only mission I had flown that I had forgotten my forty-five pistol, but I did have my hunting knife, so I offered it to him handle first.

At this he lowered his arms and seemed to relax a little. Then the sign language began. I was an American airman that had been shot down and was in need of medical help. If possible, I wanted to be taken to the underground.

After considerable hand movements and body gyrations I thought he finally understood what I was saying. During the hand language I saw that he was eyeing my wristwatch and crash bracelet. I thought if I gave him the watch, bracelet and the knife, he would help me. In my mind that was a small price to pay, so I gave all three to him. I have often wondered what happened to the bracelet with "Jule" engraved on it. Perhaps someone over there probably still has it in his possession along with a story. Perhaps old great-granddad, after a vicious struggle, single-handedly captured an American gangster. Who knows?

He motioned to me to get up on the seat next to him and we started down the road. As we plodded along, he took a large piece of sausage and some black bread from a sack, cut a few pieces for himself and offered some to me. It was delicious and just what I needed to cheer up the day.

We rode along for an hour or so and all seemed to be going well, but not for long. We came into a small clearing, which turned out to be a military outpost. I was immediately surrounded by at least a dozen soldiers all with rifles pointed at me. My first thought upon seeing the outpost was that it might had been an underground military unit. That was wishful thinking in its highest form.

The soldiers' first order of business was to strip search me down to my shorts. Apparently 1 wasn't moving fast enough. One soldier promptly stomped my left foot with his rifle butt.

Fortunately the G.I. shoe absorbed most of the blow, but I couldn't help but wonder if he had mashed my wife's ring. Anyway it smarted!

I was then led into a house where a lady sat with all of my belongings on a table in front of her. Her English was badly broken, but at least I could understand most of what she was saying. Her first words were, we are your friends, so you don't have to be frightened. You can confide in us as to your mission, other crew members and, where they might be."

I thought, "Yeah, that rifle butt was a poor way to greet a friend."

After much conversation among themselves the soldiers returned my belongings to me except for my billfold. I was then escorted to a waiting truck and would you believe a Ford truck? I got up on the truck bed along with at least two dozen soldiers, all with rifles and even a couple machine guns pointed at me. I don't know what they thought I might do that would require such security measures.

The word that an American gangster had been captured passed quickly around the area and soon the entire truck was surrounded by women and children with an elderly man here and there. As I stood in the truck they gathered closer to get a better view of the "monster." The children were very curious but each time they moved closer a foot or two, their mothers would jerk them back to their sides. I can still see those kid's big brown eyes staring at me like I was something out of science fiction.

I had a case of the sniffles, so I was carrying a Vicks inhalator in its usual container. I reached into my pocket, took it out and started to unscrew the cap when all the women frantically fled dragging their kids behind them. Strange. I wondered what happened. About that time, the lady interpreter came running out to see what all the commotion was about. She asked me what happened and I replied that I didn't know. All I did was take the inhalator out of my pocket and everyone scattered. It turned out that the spectators had thought I had pulled a bomb out of my pocket and, by unscrewing the cap; I was setting it to explode.

A short time later a captain arrived and we began the journey to who knows where. I was to learn later that had I told the interpreter that "grandpa" had taken my watch, bracelet and knife, he could have been shot. Robbery was punishable by death. However, even if I had known that at the time, I doubt that I would have said anything. He looked too much like my grandfather.

As we drove along the highway, the truck suddenly stopped and the captain got out and walked over to a smoldering B-24 crash site. In the meantime, I had gotten off the truck and was standing by the roadside when he returned with a piece of Plexiglas. The captain didn't speak English but judging from the sign language he wanted to know how it was made. I shook my head and said I didn't know. That was obviously the wrong thing to say. He backhanded me across the face. Again he asked me and again I said I didn't know. This time he started yelling and shouting at me. I gathered from his tone of voice that what he was saying was not very gentlemanly.

Back in the truck again, we traveled to a rather large town and stopped in front of a large brick building. I was ushered upstairs where a heavy-set civilian sat at a desk. He couldn't speak English and I couldn't understand Hungarian, so I was escorted from the room as he and the captain talked. I was taken outside and told to stand against the wall of the building, while about six or eight soldiers stood out in front about thirty or forty feet away with rifles pointed in my direction. I wondered if they would be my firing squad. Every once in a while a soldier would run the bolt of his rifle through for no apparent reason. If they were trying to frighten me they most certainly succeeded.

After a wait of ten or fifteen minutes, the captain returned and we jumped into the truck again. The next stop was at the S.S. Officers' Club.

As I entered the building, I was immediately impressed by the grandeur of the place. Nice soft thick carpeting, chandeliers, impeccably dressed S.S. officers, many beautiful young ladies in cocktail dresses holding champagne goblets, while another girl played classical music on the piano. I'll say one thing about the S.S., they certainly went first class while they were in power.

An S.S. colonel approached and had a few words with the captain. After the Heil Hitler salute along with the clicking of heels, it was out the door and back to the truck.

During the time I was in the club, I was pretty much ignored by everyone. Previously I had been the center of attention, but at the club it was as though I wasn't there. I was given a quick sideways glance by someone passing close by, but that was all. Perhaps this was part of the officer's training and the training of the officers' ladies. If it doesn't concern you, ignore it.

Once again the news had traveled quickly. When I came out of the club I saw a large gathering of girls across the street. They were in a fenced in area that looked like it was some type of girls' school. As I walked toward the truck, they began waving. I wondered who they are waving at, me, the soldiers or the S.S.? I guessed it wouldn't hurt if I waved back. Maybe there were some friendly faces over there. I waved and immediately felt the sharp point of the bayonet in my rear. I decided I wouldn't do that again!

The journey for the day ended at a Hungarian Army post where I was placed in a room with several guards. I wondered if it was really necessary to have those rifles constantly pointed at me. I wasn't going anywhere.

A doctor soon arrived and took one look and said something sharply to the guards. We immediately headed for the shower room. Obviously the doctor thought that I should at least be clean if he was going to treat me.

In the shower room what was I going to do with the ring on my toe? If I wore it, the guards would surely see it and if I tried to hide it in my clothing that too would be seen. The solution was simple. When the guards weren't looking I faked a couple coughs and slipped the ring into my mouth. As I took my shoes off, I glanced at the insoles and there was no indication of the maps or money stashed underneath. As I walked to the shower I passed a mirror. I couldn't believe what 1 saw. I moved my head to see if the reflection moved. It did - it was me!

There was a line across the top of my forehead where my helmet had been and a line across my nose and cheeks where the oxygen mask had been. In between was a bloody mess of red, black, blue and purple. It looked like someone had stomped on me with hobnailed logging boots. No wonder everyone stared at me. I would stare, too, if I saw someone that looked like that. I also had two dark red bands extending upwards from the crotch along the sides of the lower abdomen, and one band across the chest. Those bands were the width of my parachute harness, or about two inches. I had worn my 'chute too loosely and, when the 'chute opened, the harness had snapped against my body. I resolved the next time I was going to have that harness tight, tight. By morning the bands were black and blue.

As I stepped into the shower the guards started laughing, pointing at me and saying, "Jude, Jude."

It took a moment or two to figure that one out. As an infant I had been circumcised and, therefore, to them I was a Jew. I shook my head and pointed to my blonde hair, but that didn't matter. I was circumcised, so I had to be a Jew. In fact, one of the guards came running to see the sight. While I finished my bath they all stood there laughing, pointing and shouting "Jude, Jude." I slipped the ring back on my toe when it came time to put my socks on. No one was the wiser. The guards were too busy talking and laughing about my "condition" to notice. Then I was led back to the room where the doctor cleaned the wounds, applied some salve and bandages.

My first night in captivity was a restless one, not because I was tired but because of the bed bugs. The straw mattress was infested with the nasty things. That was the second time I had encountered them, the first time being on the train from Washington to Texas.

Chapter VI

WESLEY L. JULE IS PRISONER OF WAR

Word was received from the war department Friday night that Lieut. Wesley L. Jule, 404 Baker street, is a prisoner of the Germans. He had previously been reported missing in action since June 14 over Hungary. Lieut. Jule is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Jule, and was serving in the Fifteenth Air Force in Italy as a pilot on a P-38 Fighter plane. His wife, Maxine Jule, to whom he was married about a year ago in San Antonio, Texas, has been in Bellingham for some time, at the Jule home, waiting for word from her husband.

Wesley L. Jule

I was awakened early and given a little bowl of barley soup. Afterwards I was put back on a truck headed for the railroad station escorted by four guards. There I was told to stand against an outside wall with the tracks in front of me. Within a few minutes several hundred very angry civilians had gathered along with a number of the infamous Hitler youths. As time went by the crowd turned into a lynch mob. Soon the Hitler youths were throwing rocks and were joined by the adults. Everyone was screaming and indicating by their hand and arm movements that they wanted to hang me. Thank goodness the soldiers realized that the situation was getting out of hand. They pressed me against the wall and shielded me with their bodies. At the same time they pointed their rifles at the crowd and yelled something in Hungarian. The crowd quieted down. A few minutes later the train arrived and the mob dispersed.

We entered a coach and, after the guards rousted some civilians out of a rear seat, we sat down. There was no question that I was the center of attraction. A constant stream of people passed by going from one car to another, staring as they passed. Some with angry and pure hateful expressions and others with no expression whatever. Soon a well-dressed gentleman came up and offered the soldiers a cigarette and then offered me one, which I gladly accepted. I wanted to shake his hand, but the girls' school and the bayonet lesson had not been forgotten. I uttered a sincere "Thank you." He had made my day up to that point and I was sorely in need of a friend. Budapest is actually two cities, Buda and Pest, separated by the Danube River. As we approached the Buda station the guards tied my hands behind my back. We quickly got off the train and boarded a streetcar.

As we traveled through the city I began to realize why the population was so hostile. Instead of the American style billboards, the Europeans use columns or pillar like structures and each pillar held a dozen or so propaganda posters. Every conceivable vicious act supposedly perpetrated by

the Allied air forces was displayed. Everything from Americans bombing hospitals and schools to the British dropping booby-trapped toys on night missions. Each American airman was depicted as an American gangster, a Chicago gangster in particular. The posters were blood chilling in every respect and it was difficult for me to believe that anyone could or would think up such horrible propaganda. I was nearly sick to my stomach after seeing so many versions of a child standing with no hands and an exploded toy on the ground. No wonder the civilians felt such an intense hatred toward me.

As I looked around I saw hundreds and hundreds of Nazi swastika flags hanging from buildings and flagpoles. The ride had a profound effect on me. I was completely surrounded by hostile people and everywhere I looked I saw a very hostile environment - Nazi posters and flags and enemy soldiers. I was a lonely and apprehensive young man deep in enemy territory. The long ride ended when we stopped in a large square in what appeared to be the center of Pest.

We immediately proceeded to an old, dirty, red brick building, which looked like it might have been the city jail. I was taken upstairs to a large room where a dozen or so other newly captured Americans were standing with their guards. The next half hour proved to be incredible in every sense of the word and the fact that it happened is still difficult for me to believe.

A guard motioned for me to stand next to an opposite wall, which I promptly did. The only thing that struck me as being different was that I was the only one with bound hands. A short time after our arrival, the door opened and in walked another member of my squadron with his guards. He didn't look too good either, with many bruises on his face and two black eyes. Our eyes met, but not a word spoken. I wondered if he was in one of the 38's I had seen heading for earth. A short time later a portly civilian came out of his office and walked over to the other captives, checking each dog tag as he passed. I was the last one in line. He took one look at my tags and immediately barked an order. Quicker than it takes to write this, my hands were freed. He then motioned for me to follow him into his office.

First, let me apologize for the guards that bound your hands. That is a violation of the Geneva Rules of Warfare and should never have happened. Our country abides by the rules regardless of

the situation." I was amazed at his good American English with hardly a trace of accent. He then handed me a card. "This is a Red Cross notification card that you are a prisoner of war. The Red Cross will notify your government so they can notify your next-of-kin."

I filled it out and returned it to him.

He then began the usual interrogation. "Where is the rest of your crew, what type aircraft were you flying, where was your home base?" Each time I replied that I could only give my name, rank and serial number. He then leaned back in his chair and said nothing for a few seconds.

"Your dog tags indicate your home town as being Bellingham, Washington. Is that correct?"

"Yes sir."

A long pause followed and then the incredible happened. "I own a house and property in Sumas."

Sumas is a small town eighteen miles north of Bellingham, on the Canadian border.

He continued, "I lived there a number of years, but came back to Hungary to bury my mother shortly before the war started." He made another long pause. "When I tried to return to the United States, the Germans would not grant me exit papers. Instead I was forced into the army to be utilized as an interpreter with the rank of major."

He began asking questions about Bellingham and talked about the places and things he knew so well. "We used to attend the movies quite often at the Mt. Baker and Grand theaters. We always enjoyed driving to Bellingham at night on the Meridian Highway. We could see the Bellingham Hotel's tall neon sign for miles away."

The Meridian Highway was less than a quarter mile from my home and where I used to stand waiting for the school bus. I wonder how many times I had seen him drive by or how many

times he had seen me waiting there, neither one of us knowing that some day we would meet half way around the world and he would be my enemy and I would be his.

"How about the Pastime Cafe - the restaurant across the street from the Leopold Hotel? We went there quite often. While my wife and daughter went shopping, I would go to the back room and play cards. Is Deihl Motor Company still there? I bought a new Ford from them several years ago." He talked on and on about where they would go and what they did. He knew Bellingham better than me and I was born and raised there. The Pastime Cafe was on Cornwall Avenue about two hundred feet from where two years before I had seen my magnificent dream.

He went on. "My wife and daughter are still in Vancouver, British Columbia waiting for my return. I hope to join them after the war and return to Sumas." His final question was, "Who's winning the war?"

I replied, "We are."

He then appeared to return to reality and leaned forward and said, "I have no further questions. You will be held in a cell downstairs overnight and then tomorrow we'll get you to a hospital."

He got up, walked toward the door and then stopped. He held out his hand and as I shook it he said, "Good luck and God Bless you, son."

With that he opened the door and I left.

That night as I lay on the straw mat it seemed like hours before I slept. The events of the day were overwhelming. The lynch mob at the railroad station, the horrifying propaganda posters and then the major. How could all this be possible? Could all this be a bad nightmare from which I would soon awake? Was the major telling the truth or was German Intelligence so sophisticated they could process information in less than twenty-four hours? Why did the major tell me all those things? Perhaps it was just nice for him to talk to a "neighbor." On the other hand, if he had spoken the truth, perhaps he, too, was sorely in need of a friend. I was in such deep thought that

if the bed bugs were biting I didn't notice it. It was not till I drifted off into a light, hazy sleep that I knew the bed bugs were again out in force looking for their evening meal.

The next morning I was transported to a hospital and into a ward where, much to my surprise was the pilot I had seen the day before plus three other members of my squadron, including the squadron leader. After much shaking of hands and pats on the back, each one described how he had been shot down, bailed out and was captured. It was like a class reunion. After much discussion we carne to the conclusion that between thirty and forty ME-109's had jumped us. We also came to the conclusion that if five of us were in the room, surely there must be four or five more P-38 pilots who had been shot down but were not accounted for. We were to learn later that the five of us were the only ones shot down that day.

The next morning, after I had battled the bed bugs all night, a medical corpsman carne in and asked in broken English, "Who needs a shot this morning?" One fellow said, "I do." The corpsman proceeded with the shot. The only problem was the needle was so dull that, rather than penetrating, it caused a scratch about an inch long. The second time the corpsman succeeded. However, each morning thereafter, when he carne in and cheerfully asked who needed a shot there were no takers.

Shortly after the corpsman's daily visit the doctor would come in and make his usual check of injuries and change bandages. He could speak English quite well and would stay around for a few minutes and talk. He was quite hostile, but nevertheless wanted to talk. During the various conversations, he mentioned how terrible it was that the Americans were bombing schools and hospitals and that the British were dropping booby-trapped toys. We emphatically denied any such doings. We were civilized humans and not about to commit such atrocities.

One morning, the doctor came in, but this time he appeared to be very dejected and, when asked why, he responded. "I found out last night that the booby-trapped toys were being made in Pest and they (the Nazis) would take off and fly the same route as the British bombers flew that night, dropping the toys en route." With that he shook his head and left.

One evening we were sitting around chatting when the most bloodcurdling screams engulfed the building. We could only make out a few words and they were, "No! Please! Don't!" So, we knew it was an American. The next day we asked the corpsman about it and he explained. It was an American airman who had parachuted out of a bomber and landed in a barley field. Unfortunately the barley was being cut by peasants using hand scythes and they literally cut him to pieces before the Hungarian soldiers could rescue him.

The following day we asked the corpsman how the airman was doing, but he said he couldn't talk about it. We never did learn anything about the fate of that poor soul. We did realize that we were fortunate because some, or all of us, could have suffered the same fate.

One afternoon we were allowed to go outside into a large courtyard to walk around and enjoy the fresh air. Immediately adjacent to the courtyard chain link fence was a huge compound filled with Jews, thousands of them. As we neared the fence a Rabbi and several other elderly men called us to come over to the fence. The Rabbi said they had heard us talking, so they knew we were Americans. Their first interest was how the war was progressing and if we had any thoughts about when it might end. The only thing we could tell them was that it seemed to be going well. The Normandy Landings had taken place and Allied Forces were now on French soil. They seemed real pleased to hear that. Their second concern was what, if anything they could do to help us. As we talked they gave us cigarettes and portions of bread. We asked about the compound and its purpose. The answer was simple. It was a gathering place for Hungarian Jews for the purpose of deporting them to Germany. The Rabbi and the others were fully aware of what their future was going to be - the gas chambers or slaughtered at some pit site.

I had read in the papers, usually on or near the back page, about what was supposed to be happening in Germany, but I, like so many others, thought it was more a propaganda ploy rather than the truth. Surely no civilized nation could ever conceive such a plan and then actually carry it out. But here it was, we were face to face talking to future victims.

As I looked around I saw women washing clothes in makeshift tubs, cooking on campfires, talking and laughing among themselves. There were also many children running and yelling,

playing children's games and all wearing the yellow Star of David. Why were they not praying or crying and why are these gentlemen asking how they can help us when they are in such dire need themselves?

I asked why there were no young men in the compound and the Rabbi's reply was, "They are all in Buda or Pest digging up unexploded bombs." Each day the able-bodied were transported to the previous nights bombing site to perform the grizzly task of removing the duds.

The Rabbi then asked if we had given any thought to escaping, to which we replied we hadn't. "We may be able to help you. We'll be watching for you tomorrow and if you are allowed outside again we can talk about it some more," he said. "We must be going now, till tomorrow. God Bless you. "

We later discussed his suggestion very quietly among ourselves. We wondered what kind of plan he had in mind. Maybe he had ties to the Hungarian underground. Tomorrow we would find out.

Tomorrow came and again we were allowed outside. With great curiosity we headed toward the fence. Where was the Rabbi? A few minutes later the same men we had talked to the day before walked over to us. "The Rabbi is gone. Last night he was taken from the compound and I probably on his way to Germany."

What a disappointment. Not about the possible escape plan, but the fact that a fine gentleman was en route to his rendezvous with death. How sad! Who knows how many of those same thousands of Jews eventually followed him to their rendezvous with the gas chambers or the slaughtering pits? What a sobering thought.

After five or six days in the hospital I was taken out by car. I sat in the back seat between two stone-faced civilians. They looked neither left or right, only straight ahead and with absolutely no expression. The chauffeur drove over a bridge spanning the Danube River, which was just as brown and dirty as it looked from the air. We drove quite a distance before entering a guarded courtyard of a large stone building surrounded by high walls and strategically located sentry

posts. I had arrived at the federal penitentiary. Once out of the car, I was ushered inside and upstairs to solitary confinement on the top floor. The steel door slammed shut on what was to be my home for the next three weeks, give a day or two. I soon lost all track of time. It was either nighttime or daytime - nothing more.

Budapest Prison (Federal Penitentiary)

My new home was a small room approximately four and a half feet wide and eight feet long, about the size of a 4 x 8 sheet of plywood. It had one barred window about six feet from the floor and roughly twelve inches by eighteen inches in size. There was a small table about eighteen inches square on which lay a spoon and a roll of toilet tissue. Well, not exactly toilet tissue. A more accurate description would be white rough sandpaper rolled up to look like toilet tissue. There was a rickety old chair and a metal bed with the familiar straw mattress covered by a ragged blanket. Bathroom facilities consisted of an old battered up tin bucket and a small pail of drinking water. "Well," I thought to myself, "it's not the most comfortable place I've been, but at least I'm still alive and that is something to be thankful for."

My first and subsequent evening meals consisted of a tin full of barley soup. "Don't these people

eat anything but barley soup?" I wondered. As I prepared to take the first spoonful, I spotted what looked like maggots. I took a second look and sure enough that is what they were, or a cousin of the maggot that enjoyed barley. I very carefully picked out the worms and threw them in the bucket. In spite of that, I ate the barley anyway.

The next morning the tin of barley arrived along with a piece of black bread. Again, I separated the worms from the barley.

The evening meal was the same as the previous one, but this time my attitude was, "Worms, you'll have to look out for yourselves!" Down it went worms and all.

It wasn't long till I was pacing the floor. From the wear on the wood boards, it had been paced thousands of times before. I spent most of my time pacing; counting the boards and number of cracks in each one; counting the number of bed bugs killed the night before; counting the number of threads in the old blanket; and playing solitaire. Playing solitaire? On the second or third day I asked the civilian who brought the food if he could bring me a pencil. The next day he brought one about two inches long, but that was all I needed. I very carefully tore the toilet tissue to make playing cards - not the greatest but they served the purpose. Ever try to shuffle playing cards made of toilet tissue? It isn't easy!

It was strictly forbidden to look out the window. One particularly mean guard would walk around in his stocking feet and look through the door peephole. If he saw someone looking out the window, he would promptly enter and slap the prisoner around. I learned the hard way when he caught me standing on the end of the bed watching B-17's pass overhead. There were many prisoners who swore they would return after the war to make sure that guard was dead and, if not, to kill him.

Several days after my beating, I watched another group of B-17's bomb the railroad yard about a half-mile away. This time I sat on my chair. I stayed away from that window. As the bombers approached I heard this earsplitting whoosh, whoosh. I had no idea what it was till I saw the rockets heading skyward. The rocket launcher was directly above me on the roof. I had never

seen or heard a rocket up to that time, so that was something new and it sure sounded mean.

As I watched the bombers, one of them peeled off to one side and gradually went into a spin heading straight down. I saw only one parachute emerge. What happened next was like something out of a nightmare. The "88" guns followed the parachute from the moment it opened. I could see the familiar puffs of black smoke as shells exploded near the parachute. The "88" gun was perhaps the best anti-aircraft gun used by any country in WW II. It was extremely accurate at all altitudes and was even used as an anti-tank weapon. However, I'm sure the designers had no idea that it would be used as an anti-parachutist gun. As the airman came closer to earth, the heavy machine guns began firing. They were followed by light machine gun and rifle fire, then pistol shots. The airman was slumped in his parachute harness as he disappeared from view.

During my time in solitary, the British made frequent night bombing runs. The sky would light up like a fireworks display as the air raid sirens screamed and the rockets went whoosh, whoosh. The rockets were pretty as they climbed leaving a trail of fire. I wondered how anything so pretty could be so deadly?

For me time seemed to stand still. Each minute and hour seemed like an eternity. Pacing and more pacing. Only God knows how many times I walked back and forth. Pacing time was also thinking time. "Is my wife all right? Are my folks and family all right? I wonder if they know I'm a P.O.W. or am I still in the "missing in action" category? I'm okay but they probably don't know that - must be a terrible strain on them. Now that I'm here, what happens next? Doesn't Hungary have anything besides bed bugs and wormy barley? My dream - has it been worth it? Wonder how the war is going? How long till it ends? Sure glad I have a belt otherwise I couldn't keep my pants up - sure getting thin. Guess the Rabbi is probably dead by now - wonder how many more of the Jews have followed him?" And a million more thoughts as I paced and paced.

Sunday was a special day. The evening meal consisted of the usual wormy soup plus about a one-inch cube of horsemeat and an extra portion of black bread. A real delicacy. I couldn't help but look forward to the next Sunday.

The day finally carne when the guard motioned me to get out. Where I was going or what I was going to do was immaterial to me. I was getting out of that room.

I was taken to a room where ten or twelve other prisoners stood waiting for something to happen. After about thirty minutes of almost complete silence, we were informed that we were moving out. Where to was not mentioned. We were herded downstairs, into a truck and off to a railroad station. There we climbed into a "40-8" boxcar (40-8, forty men or eight horses) with four German guards. The door slammed shut and we were on our way to somewhere. The boxcar was not the cleanest. It was obvious that someone had failed to clean up after the previous occupants - horses. Much to our relief, when we were on the outskirts of the city, the guards opened both doors. The guards didn't appreciate their quarters either.

After several hours on the train, the question of escape came up. We very quietly discussed the subject taking frequent breaks in order not to alert the guards that a problem might be heading their way. The general consensus of opinion was that we were not physically capable of making a run for freedom. Also, we were all in our flying suits. It didn't seem logical that we could run down streets and alleys without drawing a great deal of attention, particularly as bloodstained as some of us were. The question was settled when it was decided that perhaps an escape opportunity would appear at our destination, wherever that was.

One of the prisoners could speak a little German, so before long a rapport was established with the guards. The doors remained open and even when we were on a sidetrack they remained open. The only difference was a guard would stand at each door to make sure we didn't take advantage of the situation.

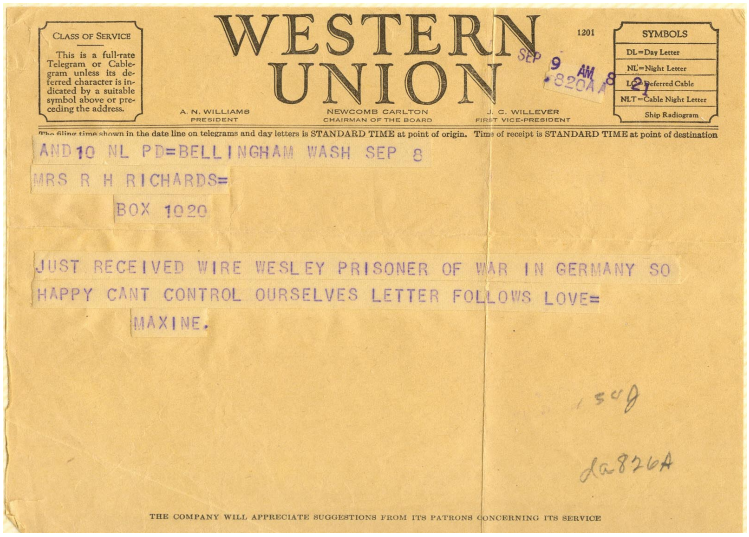
We left Hungary and entered Czechoslovakia. I was pleasantly surprised at how much the countryside looked like western Washington with beautiful tree lined, crystal clear streams and lots of green grass. How nice it would have been to take my wife on a picnic and just sit back and enjoy the scenery. Just as appealing was the thought of jumping into the water for a good bath. I had not had a bath since the evening of my capture and I had almost forgotten what a toothbrush and a razor looked like. Needless to say none of us were in any condition to attend a

social event.

Food, when it was available, was extremely poor. It was usually in the form of a piece of black bread and a reddish berry jam. The bread was so bad at one point that it raised a legitimate question. Which part should I eat first, the moldiest part or the least moldy part'? As I mulled that question over in my mind, the answer came like a flash. Simply cover the entire piece of bread with jam, then eat it. The diarrhea that followed was indescribable.

Several times during the train trip, our morale and spirits soared. Those times occurred at various places while waiting on a sidetrack. The first time, as we were sitting there looking out at the various buildings, an arm and hand appeared just inside an upstairs window. Suddenly Churchill's "V" for victory sign appeared. Just for a moment and then it was gone. How nice it was to know that we had at least one friend out there. The same thing happened on several more occasions. We couldn't have asked for anything better, except our freedom.

Perhaps the most memorable event took place while we were sitting on a siding. Directly across from us on the next rail sat four or five other "40-8's." The door facing our side was open but covered with a heavy concrete type wire mesh. Inside these cages were young women who had been forcibly rounded up by the Nazis in Hungary and were now on their way to German brothels to entertain the soldiers. A few were laughing and some crying, but most had a sort of blank expression on their faces. They seemed to enjoy talking to us because we were Americans.



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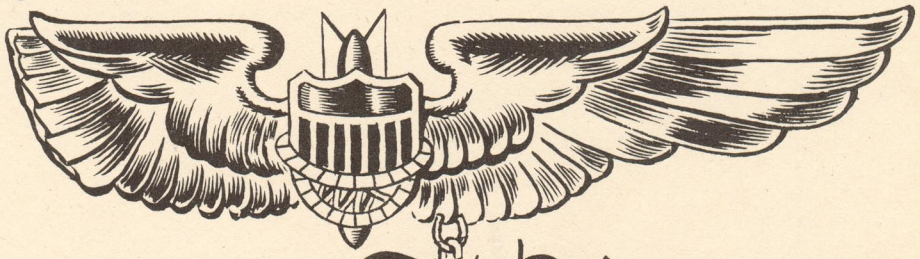
We were also enemies of the Third Reich, which was responsible for their being there. It was indeed a sad sight.

After a couple of days travel, we arrived at our destination: Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany.
For me it had been a month of rough

sailing and, since joining the Army Air Corp, I had experienced many harrowing events. Perhaps now the waters of life would calm down a bit. Or were all of these experiences nothing more than a tempering process, preparing me for even more harrowing events in the future? Only time would tell.

Clipped Wings



The fate we share as prisoners
Is drab and often grim
Existing on such scanty fare
As Reich bread, spuds and klim

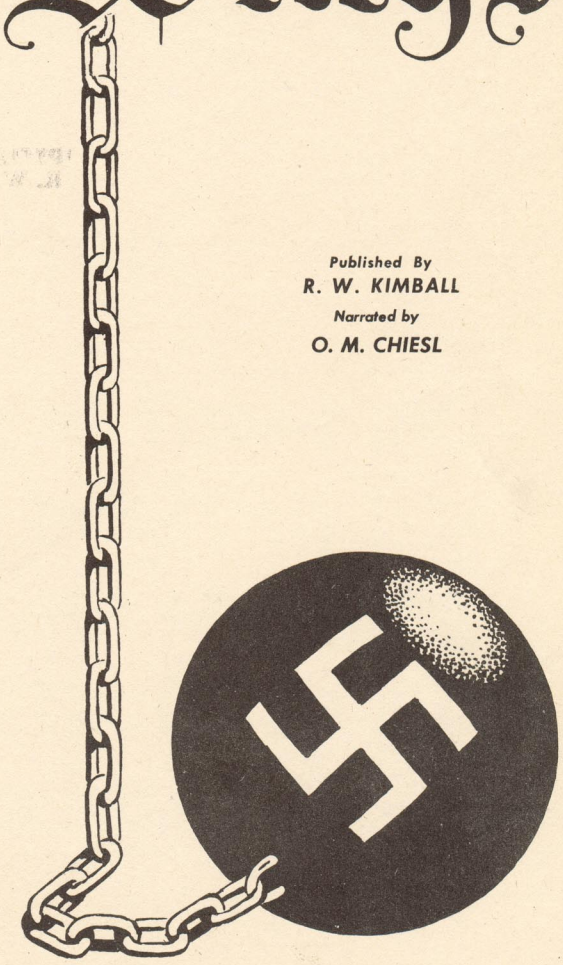
Beds and books and little else
To fill time's flapping sail
She makes or loses headway
All depending on the mail

Oh drab the days slow to pass
Within this barbed wire fence
Where all the joys of living
Are still in the future tense

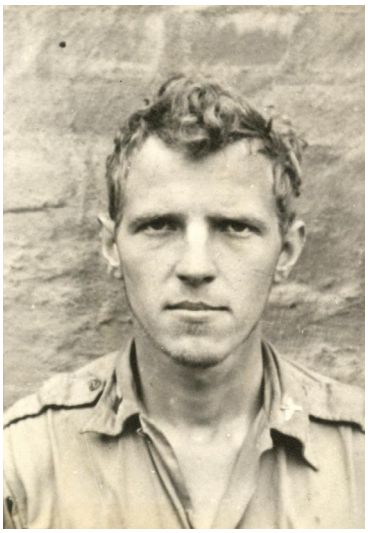
So here's to happy days ahead
When you and I are free
To look back on this interlude
And call it history

J. B. Boyle

Published By
R. W. KIMBALL
Narrated by
O. M. CHIESL



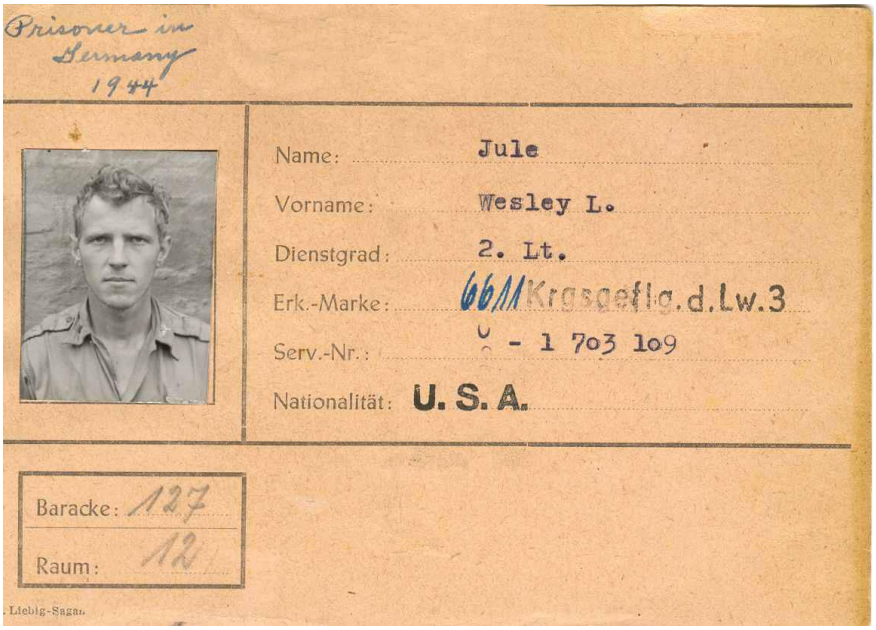
Chapter VII



W. L. Jule
July 1944
Stalag Luft III
Sagan, Germany

Stalag Luft III was located about halfway between Berlin and Breslau (approximately one hundred miles from each) and several kilometers from Sagan.

It was a semi-permanent camp surrounded by a thick forest of pine trees and was divided into six compounds. The East, South, West and Center Compounds housed Americans. The North Compound held English P.O.W.'s. An additional compound was for German Luftwaffe quarters, hospital, administrative and storage facilities. A note of interest is that the North Compound was the site of the "Great Escape" (27 March, 1944) as depicted in the film of the same name. Even after my arrival in July, the British were still in a state of shock that fifty of their fellow officers had been executed by the S.S. and the Gestapo.



At my first sight of the camp, I was impressed by the high, wide barbed wire fences. They had many rows of electric wire strung along their outside perimeters and there were manned sentry boxes high above the barbed wire with machine guns set up and ready for use.

Upon arrival, the first order of business was personnel processing. An official P.O.W. registration card was filled out, a photo taken and a P.O.W. dog tag issued. I was now official

German prisoner of war (Kriegsgefangenen) number 6611 - "Kriegie" for short.

The next event was a bath. Needless to say, we were a bit apprehensive about entering a shower facility based on our Jewish friends' description of the death chambers. But we could see American and British men walking around in their respective compounds, so that eased our anxieties considerably. First was de-lousing and then the showers. De-lousing consisted of a bucket of disinfectant being poured over my head. The warm bath was wonderful, my first since the day of my capture. Then came the issuance of new uniforms, not officer type but regular G.I. clothing. But that didn't matter. It was clean and it was nice to get out of my bloodstained clothing.

I was assigned to the South Compound, which housed some twenty-five hundred Americans. I felt like the new kid on the block, but it was a great feeling of relief to be able to walk and talk to other Americans without any guards present.

We newcomers were greeted by the camp adjutant and briefed on camp rules. Emphasis was placed on the German rules governing camp life, the fact that we were still part of the U.S. Armed Forces and that we were expected to conduct ourselves accordingly. Immediately after the briefing, each of us met privately with the camp adjutant and "Big X" (head of the escape committee) for a debriefing concerning any intelligence information we might have acquired. I had very little in my estimation, but they wanted to know everything whether I thought it important or not. So I told them about the peasants hostility against Americans, about the Jewish compound and the conversation with the Jewish Rabbi, as well as about the dropping of booby trapped toys by the Germans, the Hungarian major, the rocket launcher on top of the prison the shooting of the airman in his parachute and the V for victory sign I saw enroute. I then took off my shoes and gave them the maps and the money. They seemed very appreciative to get both.

German Prisoner of War Camps

Location of German Camps and Hospitals Where American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees Are Held

(Based on information received to December 31, 1944).

PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS

CAMP	NEAREST TOWN	MAP SQUARE
Stalag II A	Neubrandenburg	B 2
Stalag II B	Hammerstein	C 1-2
Stalag III A	Luckenwalde	B 2
Stalag III B	Fürstenburg/Oder	C 2
Stalag III C	Altdrewitz	C 2
Stalag III D	Berlin-Steglitz	B 2
Stalag IV A	Hohnstein	B-C 3
Stalag IV B	Mühlberg	B 2
Stalag IV C	Wistritz	B 3
Stalag IV D	Torgau	B 2
Stalag IV D/Z	Annaburg	B 2
Stalag IV F	Hartmannsdorf	B 3
Stalag IV G	Oschatz	B 2
Stalag V A	Ludwigsburg	A-B 3
Stalag V B	Villingen	A 4
Stalag VI G	Bergisch-Neustadt	A 2
Stalag VI J	Krefeld	A 2
Stalag VII A	Moosburg	B 3
Stalag VII B	Memmingen	B 4
Stalag VIII B	Teschen	D 3
Stalag 344	Lamsdorf	C 3
Stalag VIII C	Sagan	C 2
Stalag IX B	Bad Orb	A-B 3
Stalag IX C	Bad Sulza	B 2
Stalag X B	Bremervörde	A-B 2
Stalag X C	Nienburg	A 2
Stalag XI A	Altengrabow	B 2
Stalag XI B	Fallingbostel	B 2
Stalag XII A	Limburg	A 3
Stalag XII D	Wahbreitbach	A 3
Stalag XII F	Freinsheim	A 3
Stalag XIII C	Hammelburg	B 3
Stalag XIII D	Nürnberg-Langwasser	B 3
Stalag 383	Hohenfels	B 3
Stalag XVII A	Kaisersteinbruch	C 4
Stalag 398	Pupping	B-C 4
Stalag XVIII A	Wolfsberg	C 4
Stalag XVIII C(317)	Markt-Pongau	B-C 4
Stalag 357	Oerbke	A 2
Stalag XX A	Tórun	D 2
Stalag XX B	Marienburg	D 1
WK 8—BAB 21	Blechhammer	D 3

CAMPS FOR AIRMEN

Luft I	Barth	B 1
Luft III	Sagan	C 2
Luft IV	Grosstychow	C 1
Luft VII	Bankau	C-D 2
Stalag XVII B	Krems/Gneixendorf	C 3
Dulag Luft	Wetzlar	A 3

NAVAL AND MERCHANT MARINE CAMPS

Marlag-Milag	Tarmstedt	A-B 2

GROUND FORCE OFFICERS' CAMPS

Oflag IV C	Colditz	B 2
Oflag VII B	Eichstätt	B 3
Oflag IX A/H	Spangenburg	B 2
Oflag IX A/Z	Rotenburg	B 2-3

LAZARETTS (Hospitals)

	NEAREST TOWN SQUARE	MAP
IV A	Res. Laz. Elsterhorst (Hohnstein)	C 3
IV G	Leipzig	B 2
V B	Rottenmunster	A 4
VI C	Res. Laz. Lingen	A 2
VI G	Res. Laz. Gerresheim	A 2
VII A	Freising	B 2-3
IX B	Bad Soden/Salmünster	A 3
IX C	Obermassfeld	B 2-3
IX C	Meiningen	B 3
IX C	Hildburghausen	B 3
X A	Res. Laz. II, Schleswig	B 1
X B	Sandbostel	A-B 2
XIII D	Nürnberg-Langwasser	B 3
XVIII A/Z	Spittal/Drau	B-C 4
Marine Lazarett Cuxhaven		A 1
Luftwaffen Lazarett 4/11 Wismar		B 1
Res. Laz. II Vienna		C 3-4
Res. Laz. Graz		C 4
Res. Laz. Bilin		B-C 3
Res. Laz. Wollstein		C 2
Res. Laz. II Stargard		C 2
Res. Laz. Schmorkau		C 2
Res. Laz. Königswartha		C 2
Res. Laz. Ebelsbach		B 3

CIVILIAN INTERNEE CAMPS

Ilag Biberach	B 4
Ilag Liebenau	B 4
Ilag VII/H Laufen	B 4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

Personalkarte I: Personelle Angaben

Jule W.L.

Kriegsgefangenen-Stammlager:

Beschriftung der Erkennungsmarke:
Nr. 6611
Lager: Krgsgefl.d.Lw.3

Des Kriegsgefangenen

Name: Jule
Vorname: Wesley Linder
Geburtstag und -ort: 11.1o.23 Washington
Religion: pr.
Vorname des Vaters:
Familienname der Mutter:

Staatsangehörigkeit: U.S.A.
Dienstgrad: 2. Lt.
Truppenteil: USAAF Komp. usw.:
Zivilberuf: Student Berufs-Gr.:
Matrikel Nr. (Stammrolle des Heimatstaates): 0 - 1703 1o9
Gefangennahme (Ort und Datum): Budapest 14.6.44
Ob gesund, krank, verwundet eingeliefert:

Lichtbild

Nähere Personalbeschreibung 429

Größe	Haarfarbe
1,72	blond

Besondere Kennzeichen:

Fingerabdruck des rechten (!) Zeigefingers

Name und Anschrift der zu benachrichtigenden Person in der Heimat des Kriegsgefangenen

Mrs. J. H. Jule
404 Baker St.
Bellingham / Wash.

11 99 W.L. JULE

Wenden!

Personal-Beschreibung:

Figur: schlank
Größe: 1,72 m
Alter: 11.1o.23
Gesichtsform: Spitzkeil
Gesichtsfarbe: hell
Schädelform: lang - oval
Augen: blau
Nase: oben breit, unten schmal, gerade
Haare: blond, kraus
Bart:
Gebiß: in Ordnung, weiß
Besondere Merkmale: Blinddarmnarbe, kleine Narben auf der Stirne u. i. Wange
Deutsche Sprachkenntnisse:

Bemerkungen:

Beschriftung der Erkennungsmarke Nr. Lager: Name:

Beschriftung der Erkennungsmarke	Charaktereigenschaften u. a.	Besondere Fähigkeiten	Sprachkenntnisse	Führung
Nr.				
Lager:				

Strafen im Kr.-Gef.-Lager

Datum	Grund der Bestrafung	Strafmaß	Verbüßt, Datum

Schutzimpfungen während der Gefangenschaft gegen			Erkrankungen		
Pocken	Sonstige Impfungen (Ty-Paraty, Ruhr, Cholera usw.)		Krankheit	Revier von bis	Lazarett—Krankenhaus von bis
am	am	am	Flakwunde an der Hand 17.7.44 – 29.7.44		
Erfolg	gegen	gegen			
am	am	am			
Erfolg	gegen	gegen			
am	am	am			
Erfolg	gegen	gegen			
	am	am			
	gegen	gegen			

Versetzungen

Datum	Grund der Versetzung	Neues Kr.-Gef.-Lager

Versetzungen

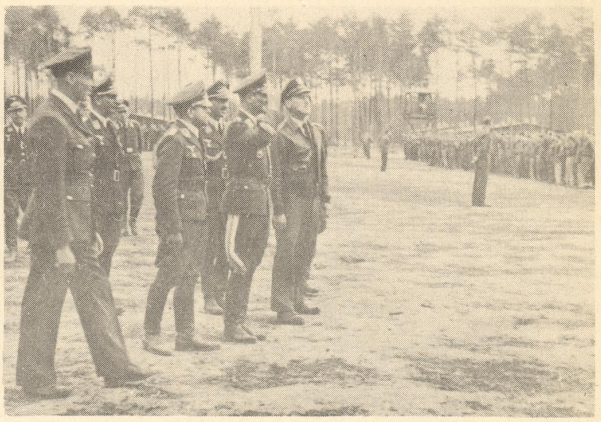
Datum	Grund der Versetzung	Neues Kr.-Gef.-Lager

Kommandos

Datum	Art des Kommandos	Rückkehrdatum

Wehrkreisdruckerei VIII, Breslau 2355 K

General Biever, first commanding General in charge of POW camps.



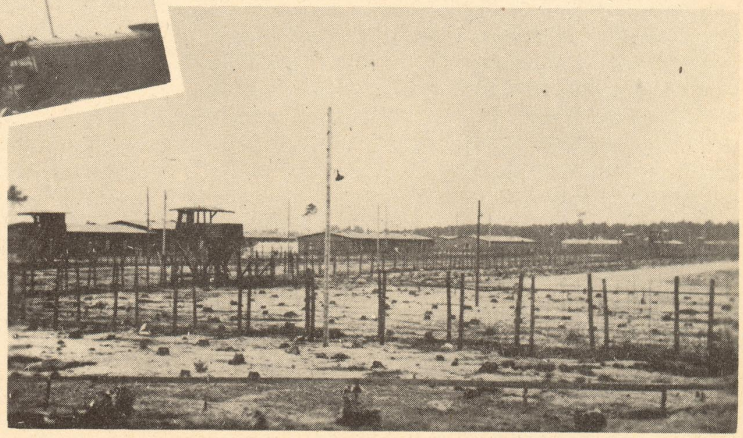
General Wolff, second commanding General in charge of POW camps.

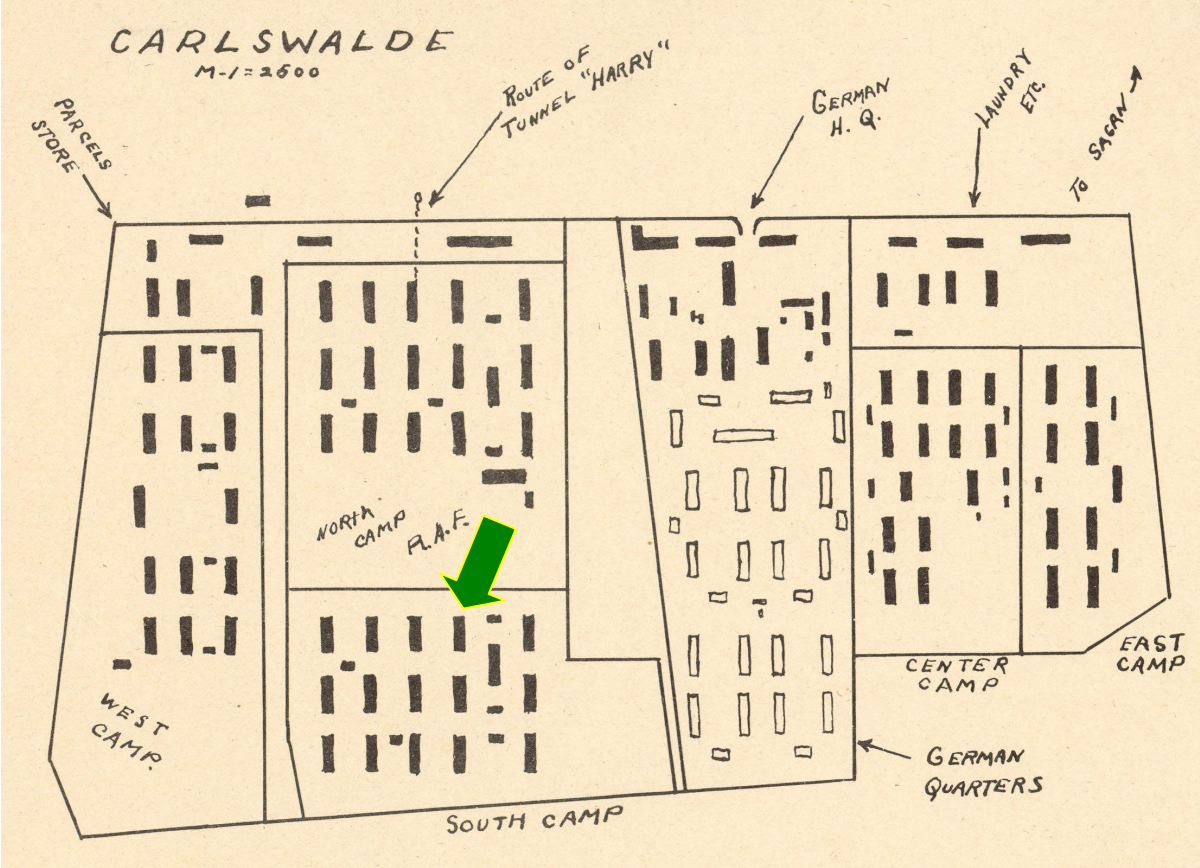
Colonel Frieherr Von Lindeiner, commandant 1943-1944.

Center,
Capt. Pieber and Sgt. Reilmann, roll call North Compound.

Left, Major Doctor Simoleit, German camp adjutant.

Colonel Braune, commandant 1944-1945.

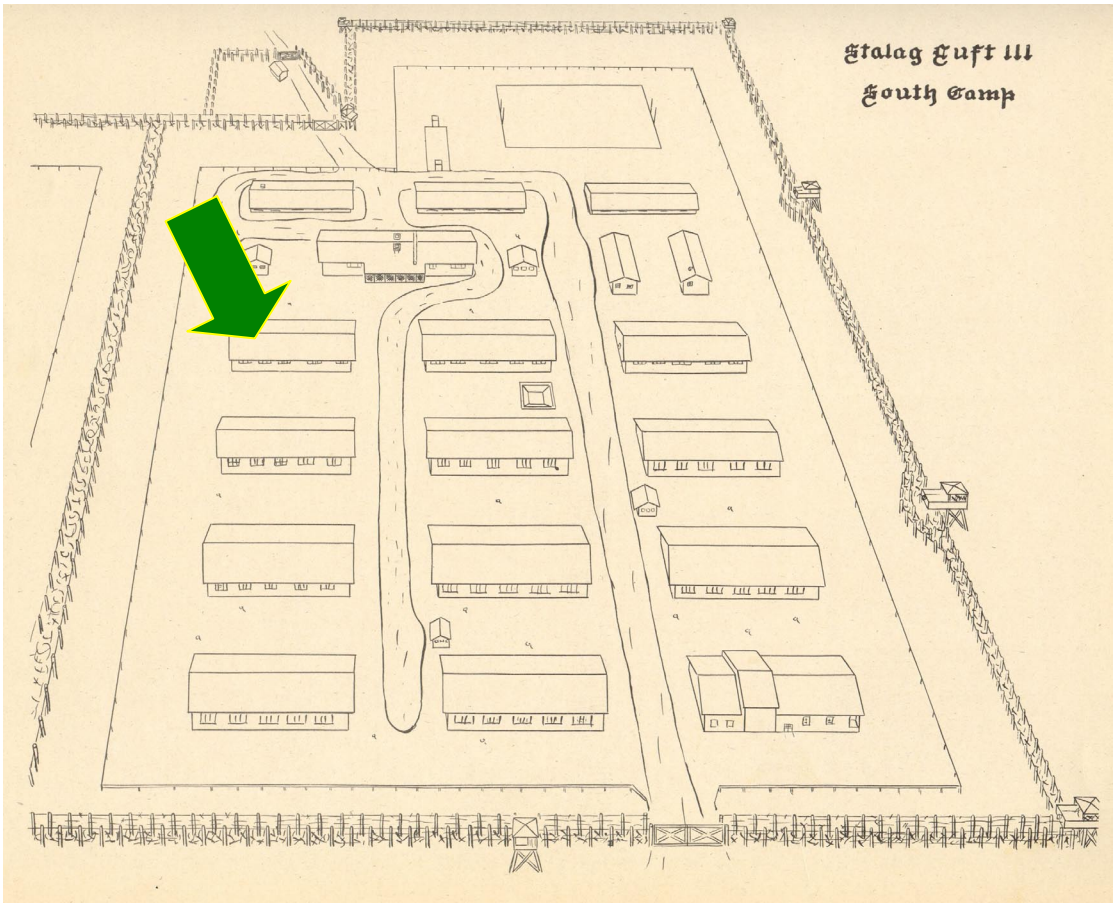




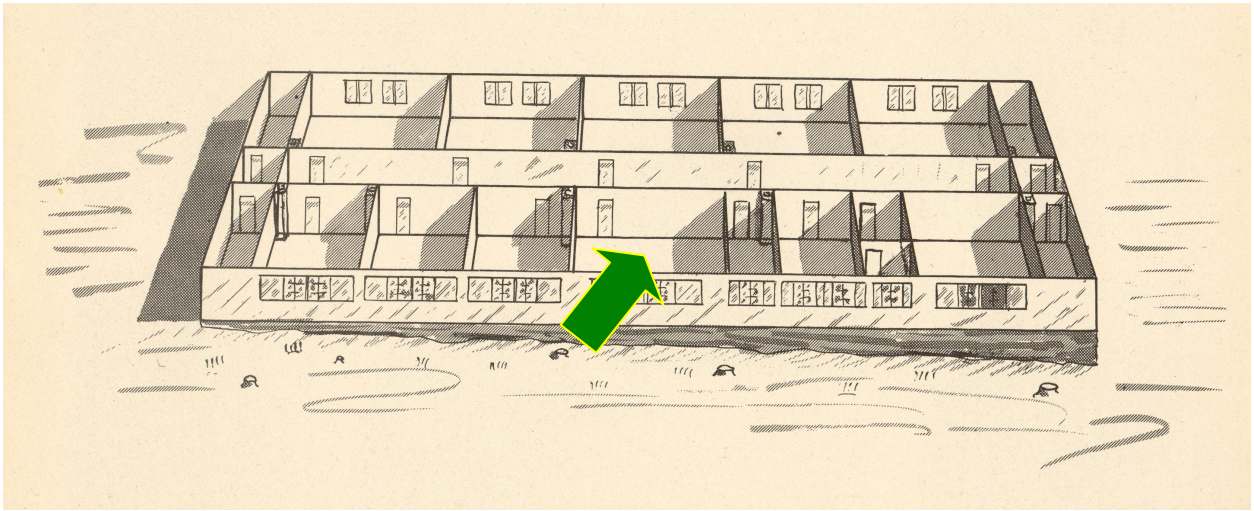
Stalag Luft III Camp Layout
(Overview)

1678. JULE, WESLEY 2LT 01703109 USAAF 127/12 F PILOT
BELLINGHAM, WASH 6611 P-38 6-16(14)-44|
ATTACKED BY ME109'S LEFT ENG. SHOT OUT. BAILED OUT-
LANDED 20MM FROM MAR. HUNGARY. 20MM FRAG. IN LEFT ARM,
BOTH HANDS. CAPT. BY CIVILIANS.
ESCORT OIL TARGETS, NORTH LAKE BALLATINE (LAKE BALATON)
AIR MEDAL-M-P- 10-11-23 28

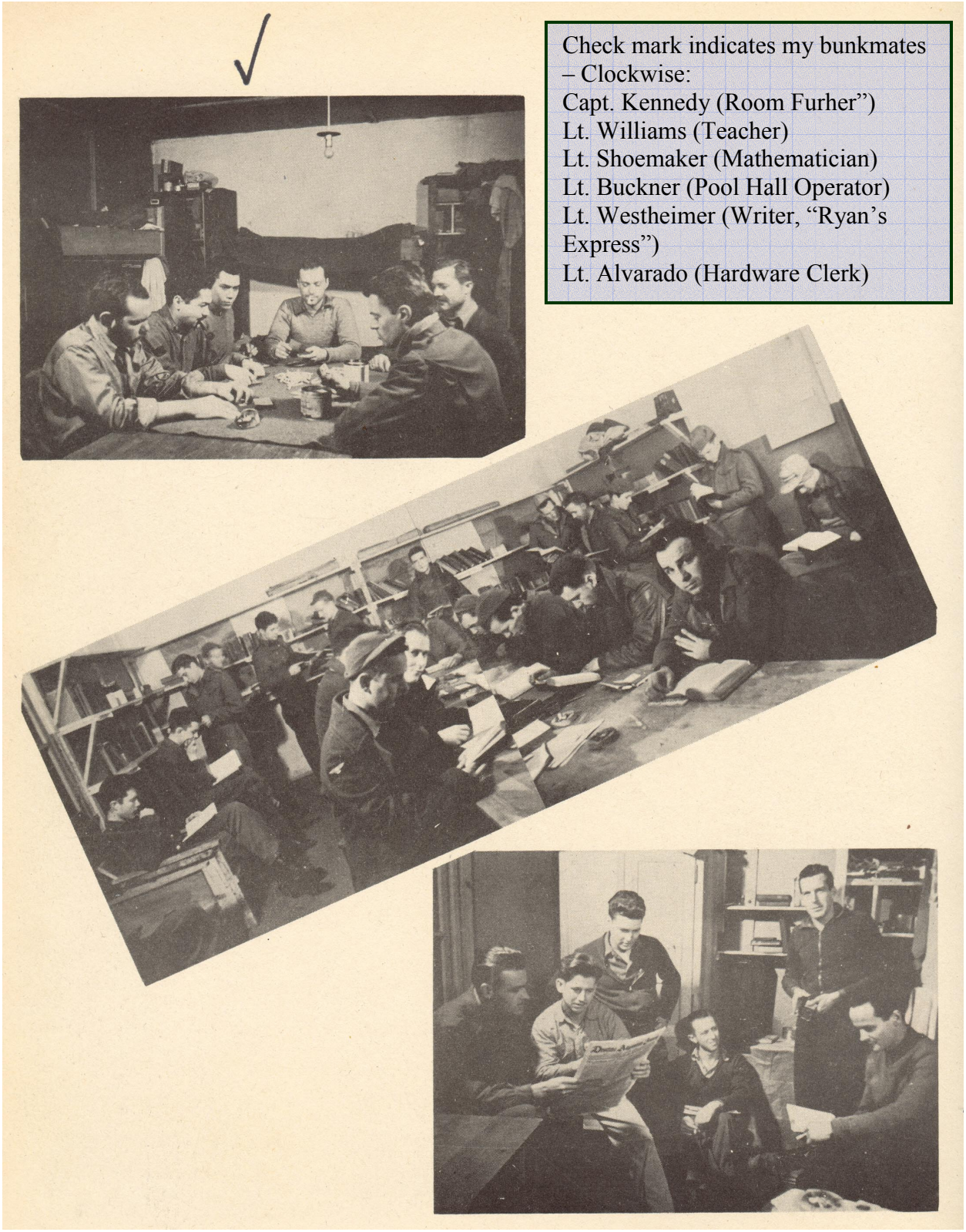
(Red text indicates corrections by W. L. Jule after reviewing data compiled by Bombadier Ewell Ross McCright of Benton, Arkansas. McCright's records documented each airman's situation at the time of capture. These were concealed from the German authorities during war time and were revealed only after liberation by U.S. forces))



Stalag Luft III Camp Layout
Detail of "South Camp"
(Wes' bunkhouse indicated by arrow)



Location of Wes' room in bunkhouse



Check mark indicates my bunkmates – Clockwise:
Capt. Kennedy (Room Furher")
Lt. Williams (Teacher)
Lt. Shoemaker (Mathematician)
Lt. Buckner (Pool Hall Operator)
Lt. Westheimer (Writer, "Ryan's Express")
Lt. Alvarado (Hardware Clerk)

Camp Life

P.O.W.'s Across the Hall from My Room

New Kriege gets clothing issue in East Compound.

Pieber gives new arrivals the once over.

New purge arriving at center compound.

Group of American prisoners who, after being held in French prison, spent six weeks in Buchenwalde before they were sent to Stalag Luft III.

Camp Life

The X committee was composed of officers for the special purpose of reviewing escape plans.

Once a plan was approved, they coordinated all activities relative to the plan, such as forged identification papers, civilian attire, maps, money, train schedules, anything that would help make an escape successful. Also, they coordinated all diversionary activities designed to distract the guards' attention during any escape attempt.

After the debriefing we were provided with bedding, toothbrush and toothpowder, razor, a bar of soap and eating utensils. We were then ready for our room assignments.

I was assigned to a room, which housed seven other officers. There was a mathematician, a writer/newspaperman, a hardware clerk, a pool hall operator, a mortician, a teacher and a professional military officer. There was an enormous difference in background, but we all had two things in common: We were all flyers and we were all prisoners of war. The writer was David Westheimer who wrote several books, including Ryan's Express, which was later made into a movie starring Frank Sinatra.

My first night in camp was peaceful, if for no other reason than there were no bedbugs. We were up at six-thirty A.M. and within a short time the "cook for the week" had prepared oatmeal mush and toasted German bread with jam along with coffee. I was back to civilization.

It was evident the food had been prepared very carefully. Each slice of bread was within a few thousandth of an inch to being the same thickness and, likewise, the thickness of the jam. Each meal was prepared in the same manner. The exact, or as close as possible, portion was given to each man. The purpose was obvious. We were all under enough stress. We certainly did not need any quarreling over the size of the portions served.

Red Cross parcels were delivered weekly on a one parcel per man per week basis. In addition, the Germans provided bread, potatoes, cheese and salt. Oatmeal or barley soup was provided three times weekly. There seemed to be an unlimited supply of kohlrabis, which is similar to a rutabaga. It took hours and hours of boiling to soften the fiber enough to eat it. Even then it was like eating wet wood. We tried every conceivable manner of cooking, but it all ended up the same - wet wood.

A man was selected "cook of the week," rotation style, while others were designated as "stooge for the day." The stooge's job was to wash pots and pans and help the cook. We had army type dishes and silverware, but the pots and pans were made by the P.O.W.'s. They were manufactured from Klim tins (milk spelled backwards) that were cut and put together with overlapping joints, which were then hammered tight with a spoon. To make them leak proof a barley or oatmeal mush was prepared in them to seal them tight. They worked fine.

Occasionally the Germans brought in blood sausage, which wasn't bad eating, providing you didn't think of the ingredients. But the stoutest of all foods was the fish cheese. The instant it came into the building it's stench would permeate every room, nook and comer. It made Limburger cheese smell like roses and it tasted as bad as it smelled. Nearly all the blood sausage and all the fish cheese ended up buried outside. Little did we know that months later we would have cherished those foods.

There were many ingenious methods of cooking meals, such as ground up graham crackers for use as piecrusts and cakes. Toothpowder was used as a substitute for yeast in cake baking, and potato water was used as a starch substitute. Chocolate bars were melted and mixed with Klim and then heated for pie filling. There seemed to be no end of ideas on how to improve different dishes and all from a few ingredients. About the only time I saw anyone confused about what to do with food was when we received some German bread dated 1918. Once the mold was cut off it tasted like the normal German bread, except there seemed to be more than an ample amount of sawdust mixed in it.

Appel (roll call) was different from anything I had ever seen before. All block personnel would fall out and line up in a formation five men deep. The Germans would then count the front line, multiply the count by five, add the last column if appropriate, make a record of the count and then move on to the next block. The German captain would then present himself to the camp commander and state the number counted. If the number was not correct, then it was up to the commander, or his aides, to explain the discrepancies in the count.

The camp facilities were excellent considering the adverse conditions. We had a theater, which was built by the P.O.W.'s for presenting plays, an excellent band that boasted several professional musicians from big bands, a library, a camp newspaper and a public address system that was used like a radio station. There was a basketball and volleyball court as well as a softball diamond. All these were primitive, but served their purpose beautifully. The most used facility was the camp perimeter walk way. This well-beaten path was used by hundreds of P.O.W.'s during daylight hours. I would guess it was a half to three quarters of a mile around the camp and it was almost a ritual to walk around it many times a day. Not only was it good exercise, but it was a good time to be alone.

There was a guard rail along the perimeter about thirty feet from the barbed wire, electric fence. That area was between the rail and the fence was “No mans land.” The guards had strict orders to shoot and kill any person who stepped into that area. Needless to say, we treated that guard rail with great respect.

During the evening hours, we spent our time reading, playing bridge or hearts, playing poker with match sticks or cigarettes, or just laying on the bunk thinking of home and when would the war be over and wondering "What did I do wrong or what could I have done to avoid being shot down and made a P.O.W.?" I guess that question went through the minds of every P.O.W. Bridge was a favorite pastime. It was serious bridge, yet played in a friendly fashion with lots of patience demonstrated by all players. Despite the close quarters, I can only remember one occasion when tempers flared and other roommates had to step in to avoid fisticuffs. I think that is a real tribute to the Americans easygoing attitude and self-discipline.

One of the most memorable occasions was when the old-time windup record player came to our block with the "Marie" record. That was the first time I had heard the record and enjoyed every second of it. As the record player moved from room to room, it took a large following with it, including me. Even today the instant I hear, "Marie" my mind goes back to my room at Stalag Luft III.

Several times German ME-I09's and FW-l90's buzzed the camp and put on acrobatic shows.

Excellent flying! Later in the day the pilots would come into the camp and talk with us. The fact that we were enemies never entered into the conversations. We had one thing in common and that was that we were all flyers. We enjoyed their visits and they seemed to enjoy ours. No animosity - just the friendship of flyers talking to flyers.

Air raid shutters were closed tight and locked at dusk and lights went out at 11:00 P.M. No one was allowed outside after ten o'clock. The outside doors were locked at that time. Up to 10:00 o'clock we were allowed to go to the library, the theater or just visit friends in other blocks. The only restriction was that the main walks had to be used going from building to building. After lights out the shutters were opened for fresh air. Occasionally rifle shots would interrupt the stillness of the night followed by the sound of trucks and German soldiers talking all at once. Guards fired most of the shots into rooms that failed to close their shutters or where the shutters were accidentally opened before lights out. Fortunately no one was seriously injured or killed.

The day after my arrival at Stalag Luft III, a piece of shrapnel in my hand became infected, so I was sent to the camp hospital which was staffed with one German doctor and a number of British corpsmen. After sticking five needles around the shrapnel area and emptying syringes of what I thought was a Novocain solution, the operation began. I found out quickly why five husky Englishmen were there: - one on each leg, one draped over my chest, one holding my head and the fifth holding my hand in place. Whatever the deadening was supposed to do, it didn't. I felt every fraction of an inch cut by the doctor's knife. The shrapnel was about a half inch deep so I could feel the muscles snap as the knife cut through. At one time the doctor had his finger inside the incision trying to find where the metal was. "Surely German medicine has progressed more than this!" I thought to myself. A fluoroscope was finally brought in and soon the shrapnel was located and removed. What a relief that was. Even the stitching felt good in comparison to that knife. I was then taken to a room to spend the night, so the incision could be checked the next day. The next day the incision wasn't to the doctor's liking so I stayed another day - until 20 July 1944.

On 20 July, late in the afternoon several other P.O.W.'s and I were sitting around chatting when the quiet was broken by what sounded like a herd of cattle entering the building. S.S. troops in

full combat gear, including the hobnailed boots, came stomping down the hall accompanied by S.S. officers and Gestapo personnel shouting orders. Each room was checked for something or someone. They disappeared as quickly as they had come. We learned later that an attempt had been made that day to kill Hitler, so the soldiers were obviously looking for someone connected with the assassination attempt. That was the start of the "night of the long knives" when thousands of German officers and civilians were arrested and executed because of their complicity, or even suspected complicity, in the plot.

It was also the day the German military salute was abolished and, thereafter, it was the "Heil Hitler" with arm outstretched. I don't believe our German captors were too enthusiastic about the new salute, but the alternative was unthinkable. We never found out who the soldiers were looking for and the main compound was not aware of what happened or why. It was not until we were briefed at "soup's on" that we learned of the attempt on Hitler's life.

"Soup's On" was a code word used to gather a representative from each room for a briefing on the latest news from the B.B.C. (British Broadcasting Company). A clandestine radio (canary) was used, so the P.O.W.'s were pretty well up to date as to how the war was progressing on the western and eastern fronts, as well as the war in the Pacific. The Germans knew we had the radio, but never did find it despite their numerous searches. Based on the "soup," each room had a map pinned on the wall showing the location of each front. The Germans would come into the rooms on one pretext or another, but it was quite obvious they were interested in our "war maps," too. As time went by, the fronts came closer and closer to Stalag Loft III.

The talent in the camp was amazing. There were mining engineers for tunnels, forgery artists, watchmakers, tailors, teachers and musicians. You name the profession and it was represented. The only two professions missing were doctor and dentists. In fact, we even had some real Chicago gangsters that were caught up in the war and ended up in Stalag Luft III.

Escape tunneling was active and ingenious in every respect. The soil was sandy; so much shoring up was required to prevent cave-ins. If you saw the movie "The Great Escape" you know what the tunnels looked like. It was not unusual to plop down on the bunk only to find another bed slat

missing. The mining engineers needed more shoring materials. The bottoms of the floor joists were covered with boards and they also disappeared at a rapid rate. One tunnel was found by the Germans, who immediately brought in a tank and ran it back and forth to cave it in. In the process they also caved in a second tunnel they didn't know existed. While all the "X" activities were going on, "duty pilots" would stand guard at strategic locations to watch and record the coming and going of all Germans. When appropriate, signals were given and all "X" activities ceased until all was clear again. It was an extremely well organized operation.

As I recall we were allowed to write a couple letters a month back to the states on a special P.O.W. form letter. Not much could be said as each letter was censored. "I'm okay and well" was about all that could be said about our situation. Most of the letters were questions as to how everyone was at home. I received six or so letters from Mac and my folks, which was also on a special form, lightweight letter. P.O.W.'s who had been there for a long time received parcels from home consisting primarily of underwear, socks and civilian clothing, including shoes. Mac sent a number of parcels, but I never received them. All parcels were thoroughly inspected by the Germans and anything that even looked like it could be used for escape purposes was confiscated.

Mail call, about once a week, was the event of the week. Many P.O.W.'s were happy to hear from home while others were disappointed that their name wasn't called. And some wished their name had not been called when it was bad news, such as a death of a friend or loved one. But even more sad was to receive a "Dear John" letter, which no P.O.W. needed: A wife asking for a divorce or a girl friend writing that she had found someone new. Many of the "Dear John" letters were posted on the bulletin board for all to read. I guess it was good therapy for the recipients.

One day as I was walking the perimeter, I heard a lot of shouting and wolf whistles along one small portion of the fence. I walked over to see what all the commotion was about. There were two German women on the other side of the main fence exposing various parts of their bodies to the P.O.W.'s some of whom were enjoying every minute of the exhibition. There were several "Early Birds," Americans who had gone to Canada for flight training shortly after England declared war on Germany. They had been prisoners for three or four years and had not seen a

woman in that time, so their memories were perhaps a little dim. Their memories were quickly refreshed. Rather than watch the show, it was more interesting to see the actions, or reactions of the P.O.W.'s as the show continued: Some cheered, others whistled, but most just stood there with sort of an awed look on their faces.

Fall arrived and so did my birthday. On October 11, I became a man. On each man's birthday, the "Cook for the Week" prepared something special, such as a cake or pie. It was good eating that day. However, at about that time, Red Cross parcel rations were reduced to half a parcel per week. The Germans provided more barley soup to compensate for the loss of Red Cross food.

Winter came and soon the fire pool was turned into a hockey rink. The first game was interesting because a particularly obnoxious lieutenant colonel was on one of the teams. We had semi-professional hockey players, too. The game started and within a few seconds it was, "Sorry, Colonel, didn't mean to hit you." "OOPS, sorry, Colonel, can I help you up?" "Sorry Colonel, the stick got away from me." After about three minutes of play the bleeding Colonel was led off to the dispensary for first aid treatment. Apparently he never did get the message. Afterwards he was still the same obnoxious person as before.

As the temperature fell, the rooms were getting quite cold in the early morning hours. We were limited on the number of briquettes issued, so they were used sparingly. The briquettes were similar to barbecue briquettes, but about the size of a half brick. The two blankets I had were not enough to keep warm, so I, like most everyone, sewed the blankets together with many newspapers stuffed inside. It made a fine comforter. Later, I doubled it over and sewed the sides together to form a sleeping bag. December came and so did the possibility that we just might get home for Christmas. The allies were racing across Germany and the eastern front was moving forward by leaps and bounds. It all looked so good that most P.O.W.'s were preparing for the day of liberation. We washed our uniforms, pressed and neatly stored them under our mattresses for the big day. Included in my wardrobe was my handmade tie. I very carefully had cut the tail off my khaki shirt and painstakingly had sewn a tie. It looked pretty good after being pressed – not as good as a store bought one, but it still would do very nicely. Then came the Battle of the Bulge!

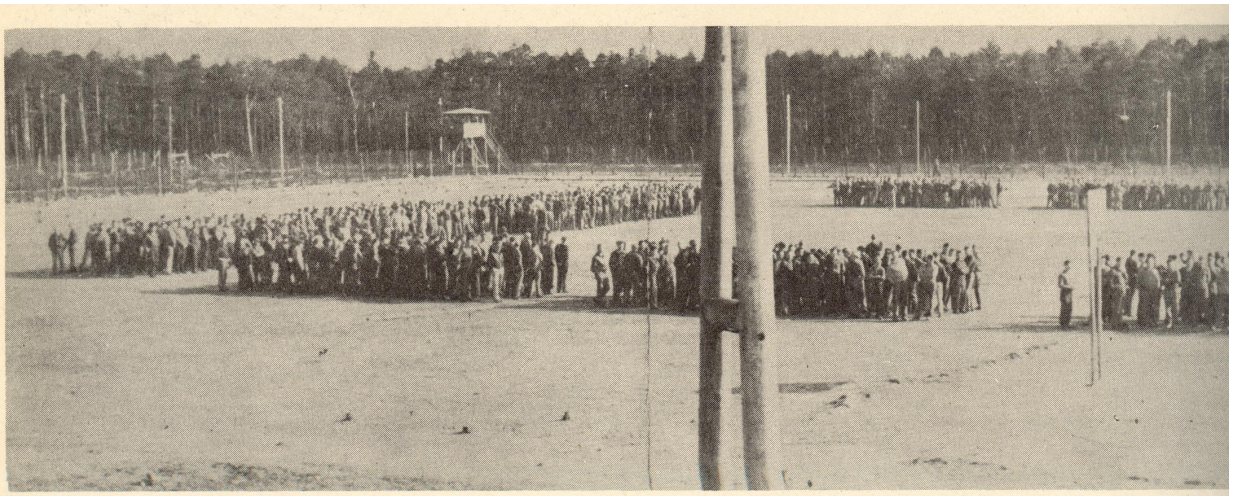
That was a bad day for us. We couldn't believe that the Germans had broken through the Allied lines and were, perhaps, changing the course of the war. Even at best, it was delaying our liberation day to some day in the distant future. Morale was at an all time low as all hope for being home by Christmas suddenly evaporated. That Christmas was far from being merry even though every attempt was made to stimulate enjoyment. Underneath it all were worried faces. It was a grim time for us all. We felt the normal homesickness associated with being away from loved ones during Christmas, plus concern that the war was going badly.

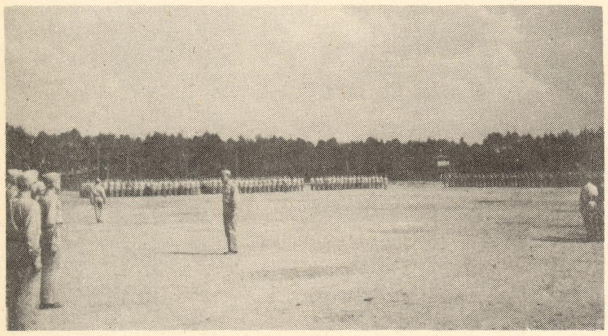
We had heard rumors that the Germans might move us further west to avoid our capture by the Russians. But this was just a rumor. Surely no one would give serious thought to moving ten thousand P.O.W.'s by foot for any distance and in the middle of winter. How wrong we were.

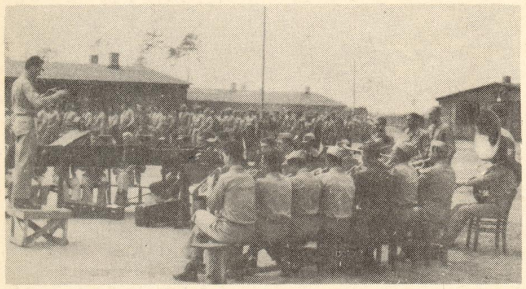
Around the twentieth of January the camp commander issued instructions for all P.O.W.'s to prepare a pack for a pullout if it was called for by the Germans. This we did, leaving only enough room in the pack for rations to be given out at the last minute. On 27 January 1945, around nine o'clock in the evening, we got the word. I was watching a stage show at the theater along with hundreds of others when the commander went on the stage and announced we would be leaving within a matter of hours. The supposedly impossible had happened. We all made a quick exit back to our rooms for last minute preparations, among which was the division and allotment of the remaining food, including a dozen or so sugar lumps. According to the medical technician, sugar would provide us extra energy if we needed it. Then we waited, checking and rechecking our packs. At approximately ten-fifteen P.M. orders came to fall out.

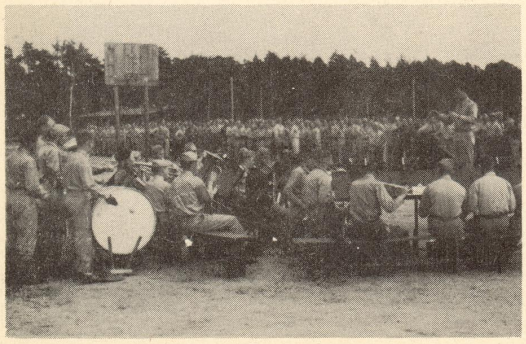
We, in the South Compound, lined up in formation as any other military unit preparing for a march. The air was still and the moon was shining, so it didn't feel like it was 40 below zero the coldest winter in Germany in years. The German guards with their dogs walked briskly along the column making sure everyone was lined up and ready to go. These guards were elderly, forty to forty five years old, or younger men physically unfit for combat duty. At eleven o'clock we said good-bye to Stalag Luft III and soon to change to turbulent rapids.

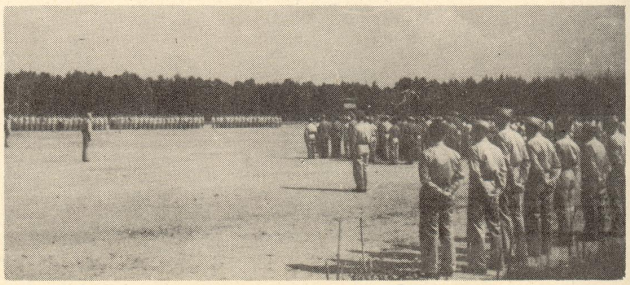

APPEL

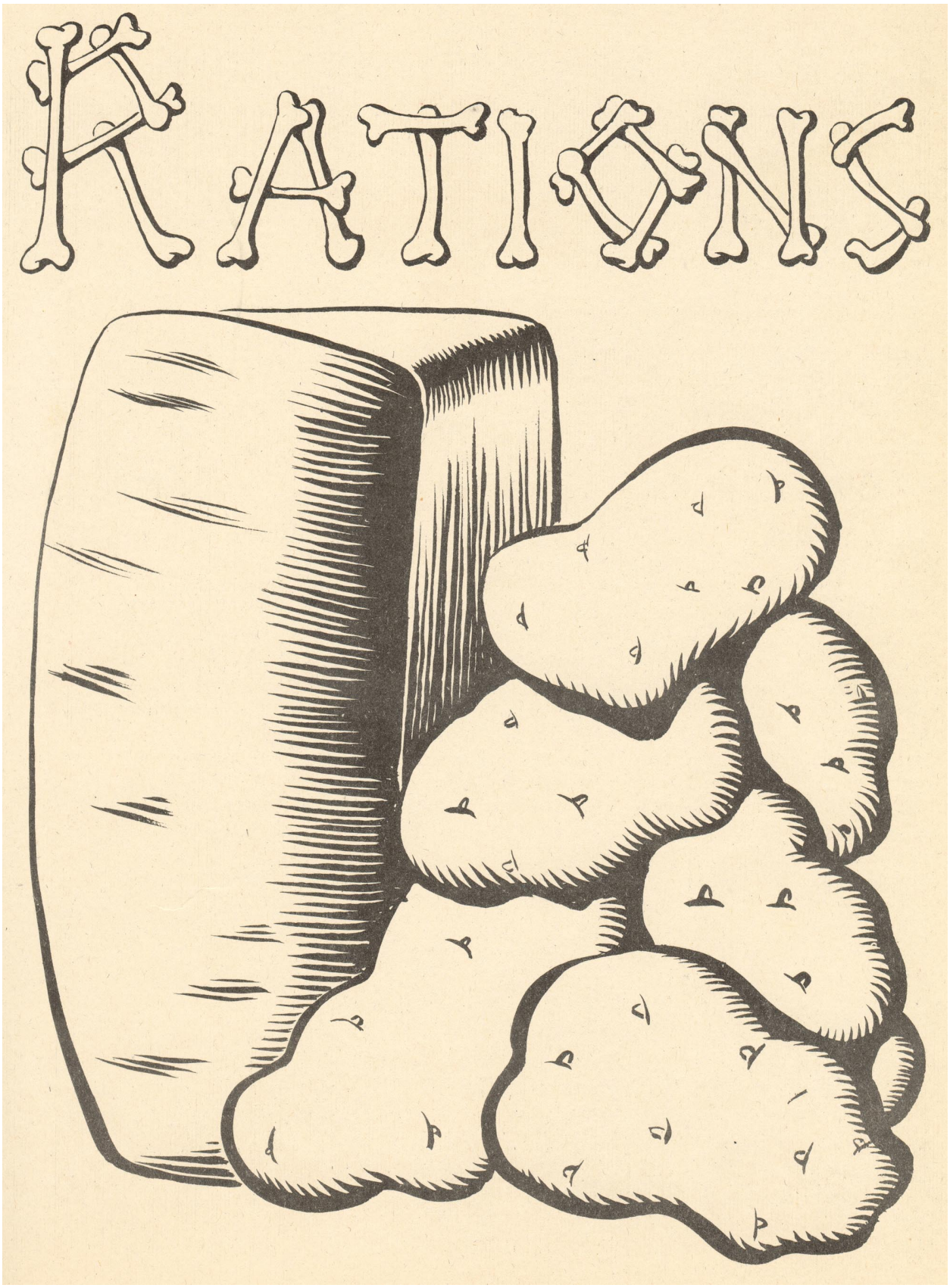






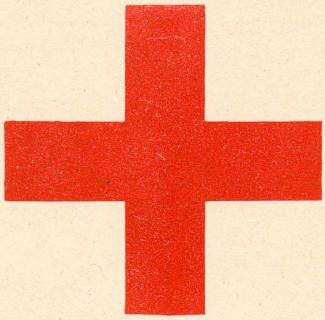





RATIONS

FOOD PARCELS

ONE PER WEEK PER MAN

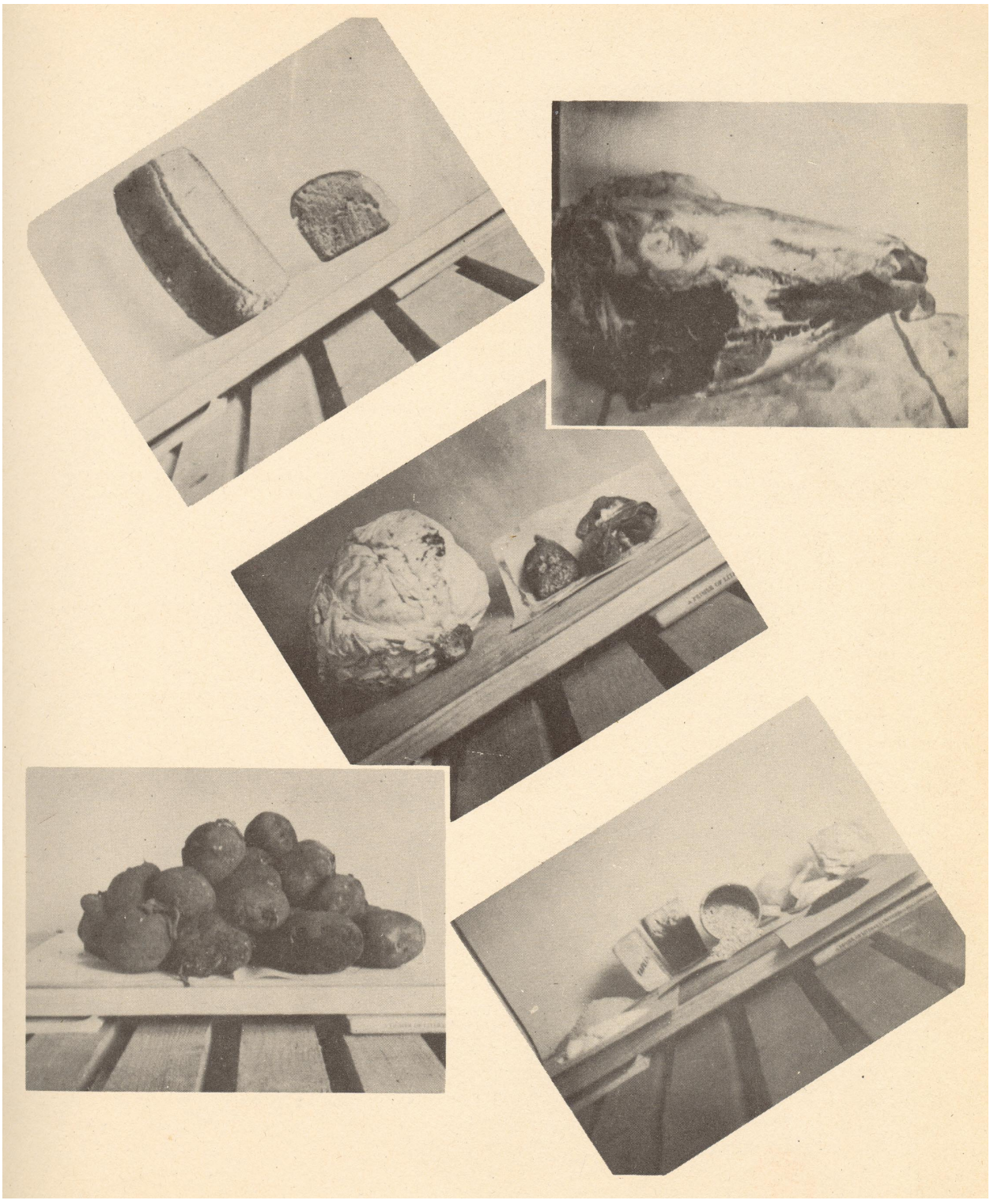
RED  CROSS

BRITISH		AMERICAN		CANADIAN	
Condensed Milk	1 can	Powdered Milk-16oz.	1 can	Powdered Milk	1 can
Meat Roll	1 can	Spam	1 can	Spam	1 can
Meat & Vegetable	1 can	Corned Beef	1 can	Corned Beef	1 can
Vegetable or Bacon	1 can	Liver Paste	1 can	Salmon	1 can
Sardines	1 can	Salmon	1 can	Cheese-8 0z.	1 can
Cheese-4 oz.	1 can	Cheese	1 can	Butter-16 oz.	1 can
Margarine or Butter	1 8oz.	Margarine-16 oz.	1 can	Biscuits-soda	1 box
Biscuits	1 pkg.	Biscuits--K-Ration		Coffee-ground-8 oz.	1 bag
Eggs-Dry	1 can	Nescafe Coffee-4 oz.	1 can	Jam	1 can
Oatmeal	1 can	Jam or Orange Pres.	1 can	Prunes-8 oz.	1 box
Cocoa	1 can	Prunes or Raisins	1 can	Raisins-8 oz.	1 box
Tea-2 oz.	1 box	Sugar-8oz.	1 box	Sugar-8 oz.	1 bag
Dried Fruit or Pudding	1 can	Chocolate-4oz.	2 bars	Chocolate-5 oz.	1 bar
Sugar-4 oz.	1 box	Soap	2 bars	Soap	1 bar
Chocolate	1 bar	Cigarettes	5 pks.		
Soap	1 bar				

REICH ISSUE

WEEKLY RATION

Army Bread-1 loaf	2100 grams	Soup-Oatmeal, Barley or Pea	3 times
Vegetables-Potatoes	400 grams	Cheese	46 grams
Other Seasonal	?	Sugar	175 grams
Jam	175 grams	Mare	215 grams
Meat		Salt	
Flour---on occasion			



Lager Life

Purge in

Joe's coming

Tally Ho!

Nix-Das ist verboten

What's the flap?

Get out the cards

I'll trade you

Cooler!

When I was at Shubin

Brew up

Full Pay! Hmm--I've been down--

Who's got the black pot

I've had it

Rackets

Appel!!! Everybody out

A box for spuds

Whats it worth at Foodaco

I'll bet you a D-Bar

Did you see it?

Parcels up!

What's the Reich issue

Who's got the damn black pot??

Whos stooge?

SOUTH COMPOUND LOG

1943

8 September
South Compound opens. Col. C. G. Goodrich, S.A.O.; Oberlt. Wolfe, Lager Officer. Flying officers move in from the North and Center Compounds to form the first all-American airmen POW camp. Many of the barracks unfinished and men from the Center had to double up with those from the North.

6 October
First issue of the Compound newspaper, the CIRCUIT, published, a four-column one-page bulletin posted on the cookhouse wall.

10 October
American non-commissioned officers arrive to take over work of British non-coms.

14 October
POWs from Italy arrive. Tell tales of being left alone in their own compound by the Italians only to be recaptured by the Germans.

17 October
Lts. Glass and Harrington, USAAF repatriated. Two Kriegies get chance to go home. Astound next-of-kin with POW recipes and the marvel of Red Cross tooth powder as cake leavener.

25 October
Meeting with protecting power, Mr. Buckneller and Mr. Neville.

1 November
Potatoes issued again after seven lean weeks. During which time Kriegies realized import of diet mainstay; Circuit cartoonist portrayed beautifully colored lifesized drawing of the "spud." Depicted in cartoons good old days when potatoes more plentiful.
Oberlt. Wolfe departs for Balina, Haupt. Fehmer new Lager Officer.

2 November
Lt. Col. Clark gets a shadow for a week. Suspected of affiliation with undercover "X" committee. Germans place ferret to follow him all over compound. Kriegies in turn follow Indian fashion after ferret.

28 November
Returning from concert tour in Center Compound, South band plays "God Save the King," for British of North lined up for appel, who turned as one man and stood at attention until music ends. Result: ban placed on playing of musical instruments for one month.

30 November
Kriegie dog tags checked at appel.

20 December
Two American doctors arrive at Stalag Luft III, Capt. Munroe and First Lt. Barks. Live in small hospital, camp vorlager.

21 December
Reich towels confiscated at laundry.

25 December
Christmas morning speech by Col. Goodrich who looks into crystal ball . . . Kriegies lie on floor unfinished theatre—listen to popular recordings on P.A. loaned by British.

26 December
Morning appel finds four strange RAF officers in South Compound and North Compound counts reveal thirteen USAAF. Separating barbed wire barrier, machine gunning of sentry box guards, no obstacle to Kriegies imbued with Christmas "spirit" and desire to visit friends.

29 December
Col. Stevenson shot in leg by German guard during air raid. Guard story—thought he saw figure fleeting across compound, fired. Round entered barracks, tore through brick, rips open Col. Stevenson's leg.

1944

14 January
Fire discovered in music room, caused by hot ashes in paper box.

22 January
Barracks 137 evacuated. Kriegies had to double up —sleep on tables and floor rooms of friends in other barracks. Germans discovered wooden mouldings, etc., used for escape activities.

26 January
Saxophone, ten jars of make-up and civilian trousers mysteriously disappear from theatre. Two fountain pens from desk of adjutant's office also taken.

5 February
Barracks 137 reoccupied.

6 February
Saxophone thief comes back for the case. Dispels theory that sax is being used for still.

8 February
Lt. "Shorty" Spire on leave. Takes trip to Vienna. Germans refused to believe he left compound.

12 February
German barracks in Truppen Lager burns down.

14 February
Seven officers leave for repatriation.

15 February
South Compound theatre officially opened.

22 February
Meeting with protective powers.

7 March
Remainder of Reich towels confiscated.

24 March
Eighty officers escape from North Compound. Broke out through tunnel that opened in woods.

26 March
Two shots fired into barracks 130.

27 March
Hardware appel. Germans use small contingent heavily armed to take extra appel count in reparation for North Compound break.
German order to have all Red Cross food cooked in kitchen. Hope to limit possible hoarding of food for escape purposes.
Cooking facilities in kitchen too limited to comply with Reich order.

28 March
Haupt. Fehmer (of hardware appel fame) trans-

ferred to Balaria. Haupt. Galothovics new Lager officer.

6 April
Orders read to SAO stating the Luftwaffe can no longer be responsible for officers outside wire. Announcement made of death of forty-seven British officers who escaped from North Compound.

7 April
Memorial service for RAF airmen who had been shot was held in Compound parade grounds.

9 April
Corporal Miles shot by an outside strolling guard during air raid while standing in cookhouse doorway.

11 April
First formation of Forts sighted. "As one man" Compound plugs for "tailend Charlie" who was lagging behind.

17 April
Meeting with protecting power.

20 April
Men meet block formation—march to appel in order. Ferret "Phil" observes Whitsunday. Ferret friends find Phil "out" in abort. Last time Phil seen in Compound.

27 April
West Compound opens. Col. D. H. Alkire SAO. Eight officers escaped from Barth, Stalag Luft I arrive in South Compound.
Parole walks resumed.

20 May
Ferret "Schnozz" loses race with Kriegies in and around block 129. After he catches "almost" "X" committee forgers redhanded.

21 May
Theatre closed as punishment to compound for winning race with "Schnozz."

22 May
Meeting with Internation Red Cross representative, Mr. Rossel.

23 May
First personal search followed by compound search. Entire compound personnel on sports field from 11:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. (Goon atrocity) Comic relief supplied by goon box guards who thought they saw POW burying something in ground. Leveled rifle at POW calling attention to searching ferrets who dug at spot and found nothing. After search goon squads "fine tooth comb" parade ground with rakes. Wagon load of contraband carted away.

29 May
More Forts sighted.

6 June
Compound goes wild. Invasion. Kriegies' dream true. Padre Mac first gets flash through wire from British compound. Later heard over compound loud speaker. News marshalling forces to fore. Recaps and bulletins published regularly. Circuit comes out with Invasion Extra on which headline had been painted and fill in stories had been overset months previously. Reich towel service resumed.

10 June
Theatre reopens.

14 June
56,800 cigarettes confiscated from six barracks. Some German intelligence brain had it doped red numbers found inside wrappers were messages to Kriegies in code.

21 June
Largest formations of Forts — also flak and pamphlets.

23 June
Second long search of entire compound (another goon atrocity).

4 July
Compound goes all out to celebrate Fourth. Starts with early morning before appel roundup by Paul Revere and his horse and small band. Cookhouse row becomes carnival midway. Concessions include Slap-a-Jap, Rat Rodeo, Chuckaluck, Black Jack, Crap Table, Guessing Beans in Jar, Wheels of Fortune in all variations. One featured large spinning propeller. Orangeade stands. Square deal syndicate featured brown-skinned hula girls as come-ons. Sporting events include water polo games, swimming matches, track meets, baseball games. Col. Stevenson back from hospital, welcomed at gate with band and leis thrown around his neck by hula girls. Dusty Runner and band plays for evening appel. Entire compound in suntan cottons marches to evening appel—no count taken. Last marching to appel for summer.

17 July
Meeting with protecting power.

19 July
Hot showers in shower house after a long wait. Gates changed from east to west side of compound.

20 July
News of attempted assassination of Hitler.

25 July
One officer and one enlisted man repatriated.

27 July
43,900 cigarettes returned to compound.

29 July
Brigadier General Vanaman arrives Stalug Luft III. One time military attache in Berlin.
Start of bedbug epidemic. Complete blocks remove all furniture and bunks from rooms. Burn all straw in palliasses. Dismantle bunks and swab down with disinfectant. Scrub out all rooms. Epidemic halted before spreading to entire compound.

2 August
Ground force enlisted men leave for Stalag III B.

4 August
Two officers repatriated.

11 August
General Vanaman visits compound for first time.

21 August
Large tents erected north end of compound. Guard rail fence indented. Circuit rerouted around them.

29 August
New Reich order permits only 500 cigarettes per man in room. Others must be stored in cigarette pool. Large bribing power feared.

7 September
Construction started on Glimnitz wall.

11 September
Camp goes on half parcels.

18 September
Marching to appel resumed.

24 September
Escape propaganda posters distributed by Germans.

25 September
KRGY South Compound radio station starts broadcasts. Studio in theatre projection booth transmitting over public address system. KRGY airs compound news and live and recorded music.

30 September
Tents evacuated. Men moved in with blocks. Rooms triple-deck bunks—fourteen to fifteen men in each room.

6 October
Reich orders require empty Red Cross box with empty can for each full one to be turned in before new parcel was issued. Mad scramble for cans in rubbish pile to make up deficit. Before lockup not one can left. Other compounds turning their cans into shovels.

12 October
Knife, fork, spoon, bowl, cup and towel appel. Every man in compound had to march out to appel with these articles as Germans checked.

18 October
Record mail day, 7,000 letters for compound. Big bash of cigarettes, clothing and shoes sent to Russian POW's.

21 October
Twenty-five sergeants arrive from Buchenwald concentration camp. (Kriegies learned that things were rougher all over.)

7 November
Protecting power accompanied by Gen. Vanaman visits South Compound.

16 November
German Kommandant informs SAO that only one day ration for each POW allowed in compound by order of High Command.

17 November
Kriegies bash all food they saved for emergencies to avoid threatened confiscation. Chefs' fondest hopes come true—dream up wildest concoctions ever. Example: milk cake—made of two cans powdered milk—tasted like toasted macaroons.

18 November
No one reported on sick call because of Saturday and Sunday's bashing.

20 November
Red Cross parcels to be issued daily.

22 November
Picture appel. Each Kriegie filed past Germans with card catalog containing each Kriegie's picture for identification.

23 November
International Red Cross representative Dr. LaSalle and Gen. Vanaman visit compound.

28 November
Two officers repatriated.

24 December
Kriegie carolers and bandsters accompanied by German guard go out on perimeter after dark and sing Christmas Carols. Lights for music furnished by goon box searchlights.
Three Christmas shows running in theatre. The chorus' Messiah, Radio Show of KRGY and Luftbandsters Show.

25 December
SAO Col. Goodrich looks in crystal ball—tells Kriegies "Things must get worse before they get better."

1945

6 January
Five American POWs repatriated.

23 January
Hockey game with Center Compound. South wins 3 to 1.

27 January
At 1930 hours Col. Goodrich SAO received orders to be ready to march in thirty minutes. He immediately came to South Compound theatre, stopped show "You Can't Take It With You." Left Compound 2100. Departed Sagan 2200.

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Berlin, Donnerstag, 13. Januar 1944

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Neue Brennpunkte der Winterschlacht im Osten

Berlin, 12. Januar

In ihrer Mitte Dezember im Raum von Witebsk und am Vorweihnachtstage im Süden der Ostfront begonnenen Winteroffensive müssen die Bolschewisten Tag für Tag außerordentliche Verluste in Kauf nehmen. Allein an Panzern haben sie bereits über 2000 verloren. Etwa 1600 davon wurden durch schwere Waffen und Einzelkämpfe vernichtet, die übrigen bereits in ihren Sammelräumen außer Gefecht gesetzt.

Mit bisher 933 Panzerabschüssen steht der Abschnitt Witebsk zahlenmäßig an erster Stelle. Die härtesten Panzerkämpfe der letzten Zeit entwickelten sich bei Kirowograd, in denen der Feind in 5 Tagen außer rund 1200 Gefangenen 266 Panzer und 166 Geschütze verlor. Von diesen vernichtete die brandenburgische 3. Panzer-Division unter Führung von Generalmajor Bayerlein allein 30 Panzer und 123 Geschütze, als sie von ihrem Kommandeur mitgerissen in offensiver Kampfführung dem zahlenmäßig überlegenen Feind jeden Tag weitere Geländeabschnitte entriß. Die blutigen Verluste der Bolschewisten sind ebenfalls sehr hoch. Nach Gefangenenaussagen büßten einige Sowjet-Regimenter bis zu drei Vierteln ihrer Gefechtsstärke bei einem einzigen Angriff ein. Als Folge dieser anhaltend hohen Ausfälle sah sich der Feind gezwungen, immer neue Verstärkungen, teilweise unter Entblößung anderer ruhigerer Abschnitte, heranzuführen. Durch ständige Verlagerung des Angriffsschwerpunktes versuchte er weiterhin die ganze Front in Atem zu halten, um schwache, zum Durchbruch geeignete Stellen zu finden. Die elastische, aber zähe deutsche Verteidigung und geschickt angesetzte Gegenstöße durchkreuzten aber immer wieder die feindlichen Durchbruchsabsichten.

Die Kämpfe des 10. 1. waren für diese Entwicklung der Operationen besonders kennzeichnend. Nordöstlich Kertsch, südwestlich Dnjepropetrowsk und bei Sarny konnte der Feind unter schärfer Zusammenfassung seiner Kräfte örtlich begrenzte Schwerpunkte bilden, während er an den bisherigen Hauptbrennpunkten der Winterschlacht seinen Druck aufrechterhielt. Unsere Truppen fingen jedoch die Angreifer überall ab oder gewannen in Gegenstößen Gelände und Stützpunkte zurück, obwohl im Süden der Ostfront Tauwetter und Glatteis und im mittleren Abschnitt Schneestürme und Schneeverwehungen die Kampfhandlungen erschweren.

Bei dem neuen, bereits längere Zeit erwarteten Angriff an der Nordostecke der Halbinsel Kertsch setzte der Feind mehrere Divisionen an. Er landete trotz heftiger für ihn verlustreicher Luftangriffe mit einigen Verbänden nördlich des bisherigen Brückenkopfes, und es gelang ihm, die Verbindung zwischen den beiden Landepunkten herzustellen. Die Kämpfe sind hier noch in vollem Gange.

Der südwestlich Dnjepropetrowsk unternommene Durchbruchsversuch, bei dem der Feind etwa sieben Divisionen sowie starke Artillerie- und Fliegerverbände in den Kampf warf, wurde ebenfalls auf schmalem Raum, und zwar westlich der Bahnlinie Dnjepropetrowsk—Cherson geführt. Aus dem Angriffskeil schossen unsere Truppen 51 Panzer und vier Sturmgeschütze heraus, spalteten damit die massierten Stoßdivisionen auf und schlugen sie dann durch Gegenstöße in einer Auffanglinie ab.

Bei Kirowograd führten unsere Panzer und Panzergrenadiere ihre Gegenangriffe fort. Trotz Glatteis drangen sie, von der Luftwaffe durch Bombardierung feindlicher Panzeransammlungen und Artillerie-Stellungen wirkungsvoll unterstützt, südlich und westlich der Stadt sowie nach Abwehr feindlicher Angriffe auch nördlich von ihr am Igul-Fluß weiter vor und gewannen nach hartem Kampf mehrere Ortschaften zurück. Der Feind wich nach Osten aus.

Der Raum von Pogrebischtsche ist weiter ein Brennpunkt erster Ordnung an der ganzen südlich Kiew—Berditschew gebildeten Abschirmfront. Hier wurden allein im Bereich einer Infanterie-Division 31 feindliche Panzer und 19 Geschütze vernichtet.

Von den im Westabschnitt des Einbruchsraumes von Schitomir in den letzten Tagen vorfühlenden feindlichen Kräften richteten Teilkräfte Angriffe auf den Bahnknotenpunkt Sarny. Hier wird gegenwärtig hart gekämpft. Auch weiter östlich standen unsere Sicherungen am Südrand der Pripjet-Sümpfe im Gefecht gegen vorstoßende bolschewistische Einheiten.

Westlich Retschiza griff der Feind von neuem auf der ganzen Frontbreite zwischen dem Pripjet-Knie bei Mosyr und unserem Brückenkopf Schatilki an der Beresina an. Die Brennpunkte des dritten Kampftages lagen wieder bei Kalinkowitschi und nördlich der Bahnlinie Retschiza—Mosyr. Unter Bereinigung oder Abriegelung örtlicher Einbruchsstellen behaupteten unsere von Sturmgeschützen unterstützten Grenadiere ihre Stellungen.

Im Raum von Witebsk erneuerten die Bolschewisten trotz ihrer bisherigen hohen Ausfälle ihre wiederum vergeblichen Durchbruchsversuche. Die Stoßverbände des Feindes, der in den letzten Tagen außer zahlreichen Panzer-Brigaden und Schlachtflieger-Verbänden südöstlich der Stadt mindestens 11 und nordwestlich Witebsk etwa 16 Schützen-Divisionen eingesetzt hatte, sind jedoch so schwer mitgenommen worden, daß sich die Sowjets am 10. 1. am südöstlichen Frontbogen nur zu zusammenhanglosen, wenn auch zahlreichen Angriffen aufraffen konnten.

Auch diese Vorstöße wurden abgewiesen oder schon in der Bereitstellung durch Artilleriefeuer zerschlagen. Nordwestlich Witebsk entwickelten sich in dem Waldgebiet am Südzipfel des Lowiza-Sees bei der Bereinigung des unübersichtlichen Geländes von eingesickerten Bolschewisten heftigere Kämpfe. Die Luftwaffe unterstützte die Heeresverbände auch in den Abschnitten von Witebsk und Newel durch wirksame Angriffe gegen Truppenansammlungen und Feldstellungen.

In der Nacht zum 11. 1. bombardierten unsere Kampfflieger wiederum den frontnahen Nachschubverkehr des Feindes.

„Unerbittliche deutsche Jagdabwehr“

Ein Anflug – 123 Abschüsse

Die Gangster büßten einen Tagesangriff gegen Mitteldeutschland mit schwersten Verlusten

Aus dem Führerhauptquartier, 11. Januar

Das Oberkommando der Wehrmacht gibt bekannt: In den frühen Morgenstunden des 11. Januar griffen nordamerikanische Bomber einige Orte in Mitteldeutschland an. Infolge der sofort einsetzenden deutschen Abwehr kamen die Angriffe nicht zu geschlossener Wirkung. Dagegen wurden nach den bisher schon vorliegenden, noch unvollständigen Meldungen durch deutsche Jäger, Zerstörer und Flakbatterien über dem Reichsgebiet und den besetzten Westgebieten 123 nordamerikanische Flugzeuge, in der Masse viermotorige Bomber, abgeschossen. Der Abschuß weiterer Flugzeuge konnte wegen Einbruchs der Dunkelheit noch nicht bestätigt werden.

Dem außerordentlich hohen Verlust des Feindes an Flugzeugen und Besatzungen steht nach den bisherigen Meldungen der Verlust der Besatzungen zweier deutscher Jagdflugzeuge gegenüber. Sieben weitere Besatzungen werden vermißt.

*

Der Großangriff, den die amerikanischen Gangster am Mittwoch bis nach Mitteldeutschland vortrugen, war seit der schweren Niederlage, die sie Mitte Oktober beim Angriff auf Schweinfurt erlitten, die erste Wiederholung des Versuches, mit massierten Kräften tief in das Reichsgebiet einzudringen. In der Zwischenzeit hatten sie wohl mehrfach Tagesangriffe gegen Orte im Küstengebiet unternommen, meist unter Ausnutzung schlechten Wetters, das die Gegenmaßnahmen der deutschen Abwehr beeinträchtigte — die Lust, das Schweinfurter Experiment im großen Stil zu wiederholen, schien den Burschen vergangen zu sein. Nach den schweren Verlusten, die die Yankees damals in Kauf nehmen mußten — sie hatten mehr als ein Drittel ihrer eingesetzten Maschinen verloren —, wäre das durchaus verständlich gewesen.

Nun aber haben sie sich nach einem runden Vierteljahr wieder bis ins Kerngebiet des Reiches vorgetraut — und wieder haben sie ihren Vorwitz bitter gebüßt. Die Zahl von 123 Abschüssen, die bereits in den späten Nachmittagsstunden des Angriffstages feststand, wird sich ohne Zweifel noch weiter erhöhen. Roosevelt aber, der nach der Katastrophe von Schweinfurt nicht einmal die Hälfte seiner Verluste einzugestehen wagte, wird seinem Volk auch diesmal den Umfang der neuen Schlappe verschweigen.

Vorläufig hat sich der britische Rundfunk lediglich zu der Erklärung aufgerafft, die „Armada“ der amerikanischen Bomber sei auf eine „unerbittliche Jagdabwehr“ gestoßen. Trotz ihrer Begleitung durch Jäger seien die Bomber auf der ganzen Strecke ihres An- und Abfluges über Deutschland drei Stunden lang pausenlos von deutschen Angreifern umschwärmt gewesen und zu erbitterten Kämpfen gezwungen worden. Die Engländer überlassen es der Intelligenz ihrer Leser, aus dieser Darstellung die Folgerung zu ziehen, wie sich die Kämpfe auf den Bestand der amerikanischen „Armada“ auswirkten. Zu der vorläufigen deutschen Meldung von 123 Abschüssen bemerken sie kleinlaut, diese deutsche Behauptung werde von amtlicher Stelle in London „bis jetzt noch nicht bestätigt“. Es müßte ein Wunder geschehen, wenn sie jemals bestätigt würde — aber auf diese Bestätigung kommt es auch nicht an. Die Trümmer der feindlichen Apparate, die den Anmarsch- und den Abflugweg der Gangstergeschwader bezeichnen, reden eine bessere Sprache als halbe Geständnisse oder krampfhafte Dementis aus London und New York.

Eichenlaubträger SS-Obersturmbannführer Frey

Berlin, 12. Januar

Am 20. 12. 1943 verlieh der Führer dem SS-Obersturmbannführer Albert Frey, Regimentskommandeur in der SS-Pz.-Div. Leibstandarte SS „Adolf Hitler“, das Eichenlaub zum Ritterkreuz des Eisernen Kreuzes als 359. Soldaten der Wehrmacht.

SS-Obersturmbannführer Frey hatte den Auftrag, nach Wegnahme feindlicher Gefechtsvorposten mit seinem Regiment einen für die weiteren Operationen der Division wichtigen Panzergraben zu nehmen. Trotz stärksten feindlichen Infanteriefeuers und eines zähen Gegners, der in einem tiefen Grabensystem sich verteidigte, konnte der Auftrag erfüllt, der Panzergraben mit Stoßtrupps ausgeräumt und gesäubert werden. Durch stark vermintes und verdrahtetes Gelände und durch mörderisches Artilleriefeuer versuchte der Gegner das Ueberschreiten des Panzergrabens zu verhindern. SS-Obersturmbannführer Frey erkannte die drohende Gefahr, daß der Angriff steckenbleiben könnte, raffte eine Handvoll Pioniere zusammen, sprengte eine Gasse in den Panzergraben und schuf somit eine Möglichkeit für den Uebergang der Panzer. Mit den Panzern zugleich traten unter seiner persönlichen Führung die Grenadiere erneut zum Angriff an und erreichten das befohlene Angriffsziel.

SS-Obersturmbannführer Frey wurde am 16. 2. 1913 in Heidelberg als Sohn des Bürgermeisters Heinrich Frey geboren. Nach der Volksschule kam er in eine kaufmännische Lehre. Wirtschaftliche Schwierigkeiten nach dem Tode seines Vaters zwangen ihn, einige Jahre hindurch als Hilfskraft in verschiedenen Heidelberger Firmen zu arbeiten. 1933 trat Frey in die Reihen der Waffen-SS.

Neue Ritterkreuzträger

Berlin, 12. Januar

Dem SS-Sturmbannführer Helmut Kämpfe, Bataillonskommandeur in der SS-Panzer-Division „Das Reich“, geb. am 31. 7. 1909 in Inna, wurde am 10. 12. 1943 vom Führer das Ritterkreuz des Eisernen Kreuzes verliehen.

Der Führer verlieh am 10. 12. 1943 dem SS-Hauptsturmführer Fritz Biermeier, Abteilungsführer im SS-Panzerregiment der SS-Panzer-Division „Totenkopf“, geb. am 19. 5. 1913 in Augsburg; dem SS-Hauptsturmführer Friedrich Holzer, Kompaniechef in der SS-Panzer-Division „Das Reich“, geb. am 13. 5. 1912 in Waldegg, und dem SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Rettlinger, Batteriechef in der Sturmgeschützabteilung der SS-Panzer-Division Leibstandarte „Adolf Hitler“, geb. am 8. 2. 1913 in Gunzenhausen, am 20. Dezember 1943 das Ritterkreuz des Eisernen Kreuzes.

Kominternchef Dimitroff richtet „Botschaft“ an Bulgarien

Sofia, 12. Januar

Der Sekretär der „Dritten Internationale“, George Dimitroff, richtete über den Rundfunk eine „Botschaft“ an Bulgarien, in der er das bulgarische Volk, das er vorgab, gut zu kennen, vor einer „ihm drohenden Gefahr“ warnte, falls es weiter auf deutscher Seite und ein Feind Englands und Amerikas bleibe. Bulgarien müsse seine Kriegserklärung an England und Amerika annullieren und sofort die Mitarbeit mit Deutschland aufgeben, dafür aber mit England und den USA. zusammenarbeiten.

Die „Dritte Internationale“ konnte kaum einen Geeigneteren wählen als ausgerechnet Dimitroff, um das bulgarische Volk von der Seite des Kremls aus mit einem derart plumpen Agitationsmanöver zu erfreuen. Dimitroff beleidigt jeden Bulgaren, wenn er glaubt, die Bündnistreue dieser Nation unterminieren zu können, und das bulgarische Volk wird den Anglo-Amerikanern eine Antwort nicht schuldig bleiben.

Ein historisches Verbrechen gesühnt

Todesurteil gegen Verräter am Faschismus

de Bono, Ciano, Gottardi, Marinelli und Pareschi hingerichtet

dnb Verona, 12. Januar

Das außerordentliche Sondertribunal zur Aburteilung der 19 Mitglieder des Großen Rates des Faschismus, die in der Sitzung vom 24. auf 25. Juli des vergangenen Jahres die Entschließung Grandis gegen den Duce unterschrieben und damit den Staatsstreich Badoglios ermöglichten und den Duce und den Faschismus verrieten, fällte am Montag nach dreitägigen Verhandlungen seinen Urteilsspruch. Von den 19 Angeklagten wurden 18 zum Tode verurteilt, darunter 13 in Abwesenheit.

Von den sechs anwesenden Angeklagten wurden fünf zum Tode verurteilt, nämlich der frühere Außenminister Graf Ciano, Marschall de Bono, der frühere Landwirtschaftsminister Pareschi, der frühere Verwaltungsleiter der Faschistischen Partei Marinelli und der frühere Leiter des Verbandes der italienischen Industrie Gottardi. Der frühere Korporationsminister Cianetti wurde zu 30 Jahren Zuchthaus verurteilt. Der Staatsanwalt hatte für sämtliche 19 Angeklagten im Namen der faschistischen Revolution in ihrer neuen republikanischen Form die Todesstrafe beantragt.

Das Urteil ist bereits am Dienstagvormittag kurz nach 9 Uhr an de Bono, Ciano, Gottardi, Marinelli und Pareschi durch Erschießen vollzogen worden.

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Italien durchlebt seit Badoglios Staatsstreich vom 25. Juni 1943 eine tragische Leidenszeit, die Land und Volk auf das schwerste belastet. Der Staatsstreich hätte aber niemals erfolgreich sein können, hätten sich nicht in der Faschistischen Partei verräterische Klüngel betätigt, deren Wühlarbeit in der Sitzung des Faschistischen Großrats vom 24. Juli ihre giftige Frucht trug. Eine starke Mehrheit des Großrats hat damals dem Duce den Gehorsam aufgesagt und das Machtgefüge des Faschismus tödlich getroffen. Badoglio, selbst Mitglied jener Obersten Parteiinstanz, hat dann sofort zugegriffen, um auch den Duce auszuschalten und damit die Bahn für ein Paktieren mit dem Feind freigemacht, das am 3. September mit der Kapitulation hinter dem Rücken des deutschen Verbündeten abschloß.

Durch die Befreiung des Duce und die Aufrichtung der Republikanischen Faschistischen Partei wurde dann der Ausgangspunkt zu einem neuen Werden gewonnen. Es war nur selbstverständlich, daß der neue Faschismus ohne Ansehen der Person mit den Verrätern am Duce schneidend abrechnen würde. Vom Geist eines aufbauenden revolutionären Wollens beseelt, hat die Republikanisch-Faschistische Regierung nur dem Volkswillen entsprochen, als sie den Prozeß gegen die 19 Verräter durchführte und über sie die einzig mögliche Strafe verhängte, die der Schwere ihres Verbrechens an der Nation entsprach: den Tod. Sie alle waren durch das Vertrauen des Duce als dessen engste Berater eingesetzt worden mit dem Auftrag, für die Größe Italiens jedes persönliche Opfer zu bringen und an führender Stelle ein leuchtendes Vorbild für das Volk zu sein. Stattdessen haben sie persönliches Interesse, Ehrgeiz und Eitelkeit vorangestellt, Verschwörungen innerhalb der Faschistischen Partei angezettelt, ihre Treuepflicht gegenüber dem Duce schmählich verletzt und die Kriegführung sabotiert.

Auf ihren Schultern lastet erdrückend der weitaus größte Teil der Verantwortung für die Vorgänge im Juli 1943 und für alles andere, was danach folgte. Sie haben es dahin gebracht, daß heute ein Teil ihres Vaterlandes unter dem Druck der englisch-amerikanischen Fremdherrschaft seufzt, von Parteistreitigkeiten zerfleischt wird, der Gefahr einer Bolschewisierung ausgesetzt ist und Not und Tod in jeder Gestalt zu erdulden hat. Sie sind es, die dazu beigetragen haben, daß der Krieg heute in Italien selbst mit verheerender Wucht geführt wird, daß ihr Mitverräter Badoglio als Lakai der Todfeinde der Größe Italiens Italiener gegen Italiener hetzt.

Dieses beispiellose Verbrechen konnte nur durch ein Urteil gesühnt werden, das von revolutionärem Atem durchglüht war und die Schande ausbrennt, die Italiens Unglück geworden ist: den feigen Verrat an Volk und Land. Die meisten dieser Verbrecher haben sich ins Lager des Feindes geflüchtet, um der Gerechtigkeit zu entgehen. Diejenigen aber, die dingfest gemacht werden konnten, sind heute nicht mehr, und der Fluch ganz Italiens folgt ihnen in die Grube nach. Der neuerstandene Faschismus aber hat damit seine historische Berufung zur Erneuerung Italiens an Haupt und Gliedern bestätigt und gezeigt, daß dort heute niemand ungestraft gegen das Leben der Nation freveln kann. Das Urteil von Verona wird daher in der Geschichte des Wiederaufstiegs Italiens einen Ehrenplatz einnehmen, weil es beweist, daß nunmehr wieder die gesunde Rangordnung der Werte wiederhergestellt ist, an deren Spitze Treue und Ehre stehen, und daß die Verteidigung des Lebensrechts der Nation das oberste Gesetz alles Geschehens ist und bleibt.

V. B.

Die kriegswirtschaftliche Lage

Von Fritz Nonnenbruch

Für die Leistungsfähigkeit einer Kriegswirtschaft sind drei Faktoren maßgebend: erstens die Zahl der einsatzfähigen Menschen, zweitens der natürliche Rohstoffreichtum, drittens die Organisation der volkswirtschaftlichen Leistungskräfte.

Was die Zahl der menschlichen Arbeitskräfte betrifft, so stehen die Mächte des Dreierpaktes nicht ungünstig da. In Kontinentaleuropa verfügen sie über ein Menschenreservoir von 350 Millionen und in dem japanischen Einflußbereich über rund 500 Millionen. Das sind zusammen 850 Millionen, die den 1100 Millionen bei unseren Gegnern gegenüberstehen. Dabei ist aber zu beachten, daß der Prozentsatz der wirklich Einsatzfähigen beim Feind wesentlich niedriger liegt als bei den Dreierpaktmächten. Der Hunger in Indien wirkt, um nur ein Beispiel zu nennen, auf die Leistungsfähigkeit selbstverständlich ein, und die in den 1,1 Milliarden mitgezählten Neger der afrikanischen Kolonien sind überhaupt nur zum Teil einsatzfähig. Dazu kommt für die Dreierpaktmächte, daß ihre Arbeitskräfte in zwei geschlossenen Blocks zusammenliegen, während die der Gegner weit zerstreut sind. Wesentlich ist auch der höhere Anteil der Facharbeiter, der in Deutschland bei den männlichen Arbeitskräften über 70 v. H. beträgt, während er in England und den USA. auf den viel niedrigeren Quoten von 30 und 40 v. H. steht.

Unsere an sich viel günstigere Arbeitseinsatzlage ist durch den Umstand belastet, daß es natürlich schwieriger ist, den Arbeitseinsatz in eroberten und besetzten Gebieten zu vollziehen als innerhalb der eigenen Staatsgrenzen. Ferner macht unser Rohstoffmangel auf vielen Gebieten einen erhöhten Arbeitseinsatz nötig. Wo Oel aus dem Boden gewonnen werden kann, sind weniger Arbeitskräfte vonnöten als bei der synthetischen Herstellung von Oel aus Kohle und Braunkohle, die ihrerseits ja ebenfalls wieder gefördert werden müssen. Aber auch bei unseren Feinden wächst der Zwang zur synthetischen Rohstoffgewinnung und zapft damit ihre Reservoire von Arbeitskräften an. Der Verlust der Erzeugungsgebiete von Naturkautschuk zum Beispiel erfordert für die synthetische Herstellung in den USA. und England bereits beträchtliche zusätzliche Arbeitskräfte.

Es gehört überhaupt zu den vielen neuen Erscheinungen dieses Krieges, daß auch der natürliche Rohstoffreichtum in erster Linie unter dem Blickwinkel des Arbeitseinsatzes zu betrachten ist. Die größten Vorkommen von Kohle nutzen nichts, wenn die Kohleförderung entweder nicht klappt wie in England oder durch Streiks bedroht ist wie in den USA. Auch trotz seines Reichtums an Holz und Vieh besteht in Amerika ein ausgesprochener Mangel an Papier und Leder.

Der Arbeitseinsatz, der, wie diese Beispiele verraten, auch für die Rohstoffwirtschaft so große Bedeutung hat, ist maßgeblich bestimmt von dem dritten für die Kriegswirtschaft wichtigen Faktor, nämlich der Organisation. **Und diesen Faktor halten wir, nachdem die Menschenreserven auf beiden Seiten sich unter Berücksichtigung aller Umstände nicht viel nachgeben, für den allerwichtigsten. Hier liegt der entscheidende Vorteil bei den Dreierpaktmächten.** Zwar ist unser Arbeitseinsatz verhältnismäßig langsam angelaufen, aber er strafft sich zusehend weiter. Es lohnt sich, daß Deutschland auch die ausländischen Arbeitskräfte unter der stärksten Berücksichtigung der sozialen Gesichtspunkte, die der Krieg noch erlaubt, eingesetzt hat. Aehnlich liegen die Dinge in Japan und im japanischen Einflußbereich. Deutschland ist es ferner gelungen, die Ordnung in den von ihm besetzten Gebieten wieder herzustellen. Zustände, wie sie nach der englisch-amerikanischen Besetzung in Unteritalien eingerissen sind, waren im deutschen Machtbereich nie zu verzeichnen. In den unter deutschem Einfluß stehenden Ländern ist ein, wenn auch zuweilen langsamer, so doch stetiger, wirtschaftlicher Aufstieg zu beobachten, der natürlich sowohl psychologisch als auch organisationsmäßig den Arbeitseinsatz fördert und ihm Stabilität verspricht.

Ganz anders liegen die Dinge bei unseren Gegnern. Deutschland ist sowohl im eigenen Reichsgebiet als auch in den Gebieten seines Machtbereiches über den kriegswirtschaftlichen Gefahrenpunkt hinaus. Der bestand in der Frage, ob die Bevölkerung bereit sei, für Kriegsdauer eine wesentliche Senkung ihrer Einkäufe trotz guten Einkommens hinzunehmen. Das sich auf dieser Bereitwilligkeit aufbauende System der Güterverteilung hat sich nun so fest eingespielt, daß es kaum noch zu erschüttern sein wird. Ferner sind inzwischen auch alle ausländischen Arbeiter unmittelbar am deutschen Sieg interessiert; denn sie haben inzwischen Ersparnisse gemacht, die nur die nach dem Siege friedensmäßig organisierte europäische Wirtschaftskraft kauffähig machen kann.

Der kriegswirtschaftliche Gefahrenpunkt wird sich aber für die USA im laufenden Jahr bemerkbar machen. In den USA arbeiten mehr Menschen

Das Ende der Atlantik-Urkunde

Churchill: „Damned, hier fehlt schon wieder Papier!"

Yankee-Ueberlegenheit

„Ouhh, Jim – in einer Minute legen wir doch um, was diese bloody Boys vom alten Europa in Jahrhunderten gebaut haben!!"

VÖLKISCHER BEOBACHTER

Der jüdisch-amerikanische Weltherrschaftsplan und der überflüssige King

Zeichnung: Mjölnir

„Ich k – könnte mich vielleicht beschneiden lassen – –?"

Die anglo-amerikanischen Luftheiden

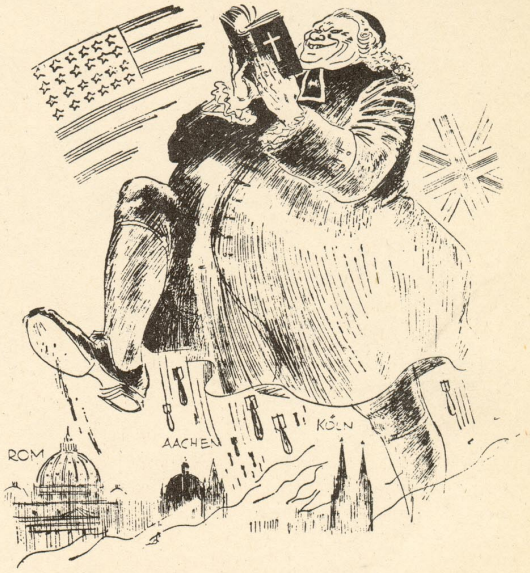
Vom Geldschrankknacker zum „Wohnblockknacker"

USA.-Kultur

Zeichnung: Mjölnir

„Oh, Massa Reporter! Sein Vater war schon ein berühmter Sträfling – und er hat nun Rom bombardiert!"

Tartuffe marschiert



Zeichnung: Mjölnir

„Vorwärts, Soldaten Christi" – – bis alle Kirchen zertrampelt sind!

Gehirntrustmagnat Baruch im Weißen Haus

„Wetten, daß ich heute weiß, was Se morgen werden denken, Herr Präsident?!"

Zeichnung: Mjölnir

Aus dem Stalinparadies

Zeichnung: Mjölnir

„Unsere Komintern-Sektionen im Ausland farnen sich jetzt als „Kulturvereine" „Großartig! Aber was ist das: „Kultur"?"

Willie Green's Flying Machine.

This is the fable of Willie Green
Who invented a kriege flying machine,
'Tis as wierd a tale as ever you heard
Yet I'll swear by the truth of every word.

The man who first heard it, suspicious as I,
Swore by his chocolate 'twas all a great lie.
But imagine his surprise, the gleam in his eyes,
When Willie's machine was seen to fly.

The parts were gathered-'tis no secret now-
But Willie alone knows the secret how.
They were hidden away in corners and places
While he carved away on the spars and braces.

The tin can piles were low indeed
When W. G. performed his deed
There still is talk of that famous day
As the last Klim-tin was hidden away.

The engin, was the first of the plane to be made
With crankshaft of steel from the missing spade
While in Klim-can cylinders with mighty sound
The butter can pistons went up and down.

The flashy propeller so aerodynamic
Was carved from a board in the barracks attic
While the peculiar strand that made the ignition
Was a length of barbed-wire from the compound partition.

Fuel was no problem to a man with a head
And Willie got gas from cabbage and bread.
In case of emergency, Willie held
The thing could easily be Rocket-propelled.

The side of the bed the fuselage made
The stick, the handle of the fore-mentioned spade
The instruments, it could be seen at a glance
Was none other than the seat of Willie's pants.

Two locker doors the wings did make
With dihedral taper and negative rake
And a Red Cross box from a racket source
Served as the tail for his flying horse.

The question of wheels was mighty hot
Till Willie remembered the communal pot
While Kriegies were wondering how it disappeared
Willie's machine became tricycle geared.

There were no guns on Willie's steed
Its only defense was its excessive speed
To weight down the tail our hero used
A size "12" pair of British shoes.

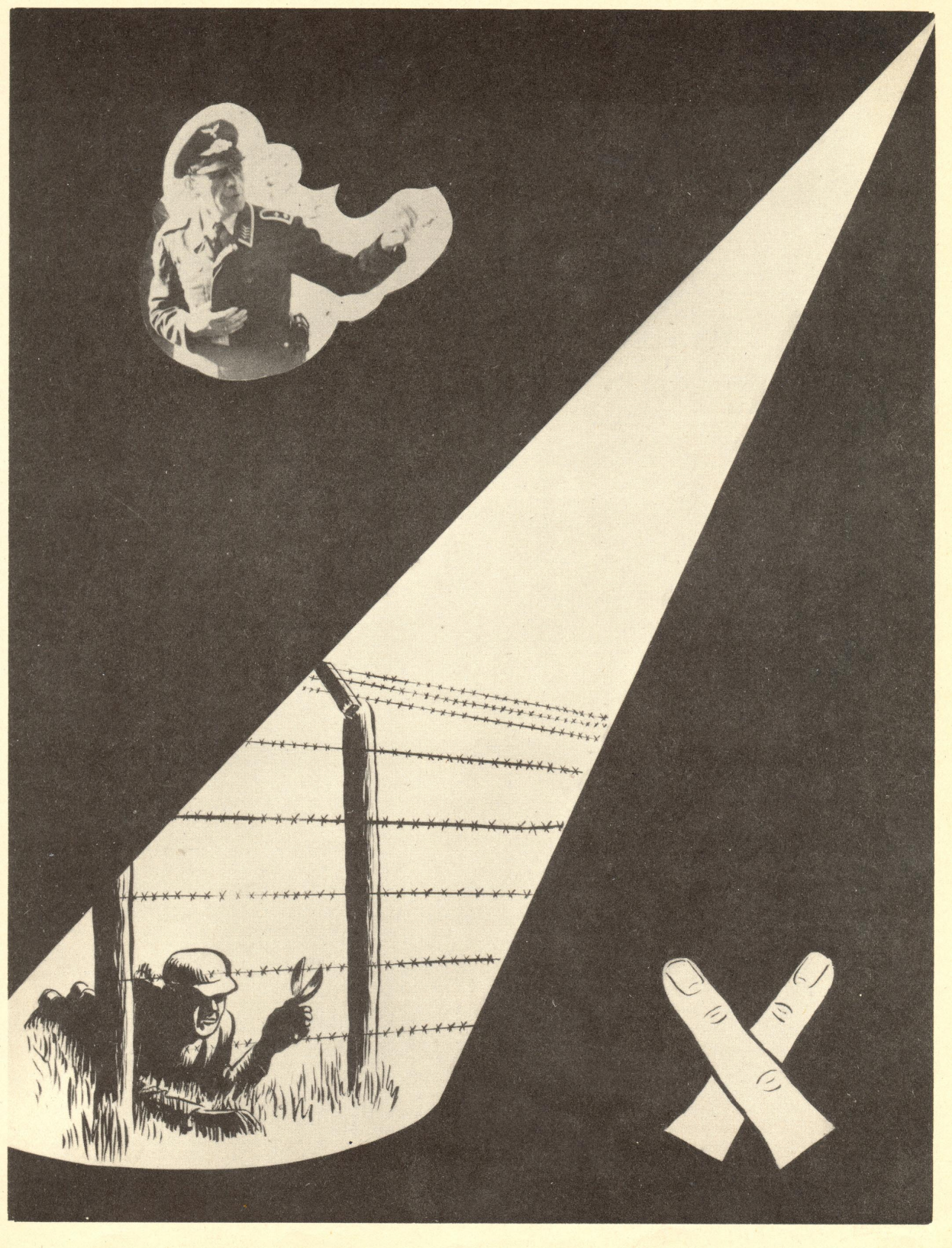
And when it was done our Willie cried
"Enough, enough, I'm satisfied."
And one dark night when conditions were best
Willie's machine was put to the test.

The prop turned over, the engine caught,
"Aha." said Willie "'twas not for naught."
The plane jumped forward, started to fly
And was over the fence in the wink of an eye.

The guard yelled "Verboten" and started to shoot
But all his efforts were as good as "Kapoot"
Willie flew on and into the dark
Toward Ellis Island and Battery Park

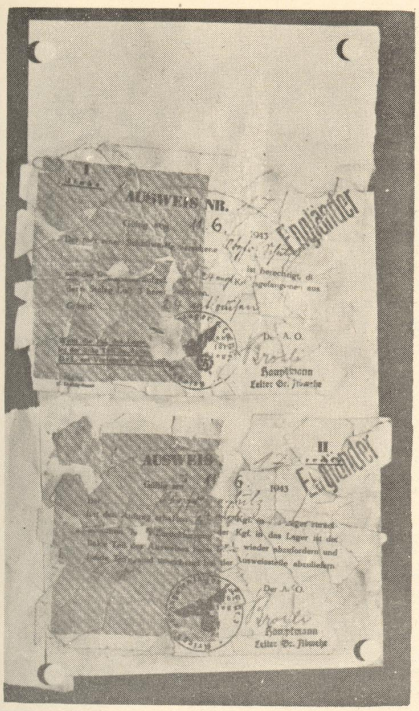
The plane flew on until Willie spied
The lights that marked the other side.
He felt so good and oh so free
His Red Cross box fell into the sea.

A crowd was there when he landed his crate
"Where am I?" he asked, "It sure looks great"
"Why where" they cried "were you headed for?"
"This my boy--------is STALAG LUFT IV."



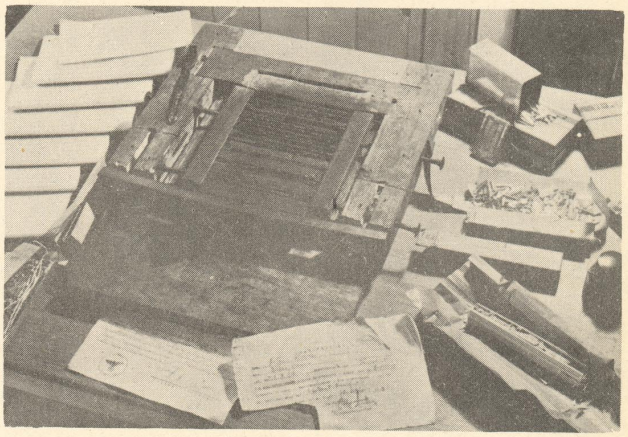
Above, South Compound Ferrets.

Left, Casey Jones talking to ferrets "Blue Boy" and Ziefert.

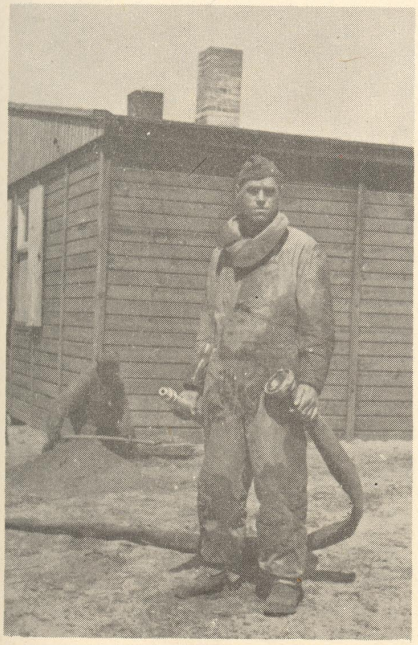


Pass used by the 24 kriegies who escaped on the delousing party.

Pass used the same day by the senior officers who were caught between the gates.

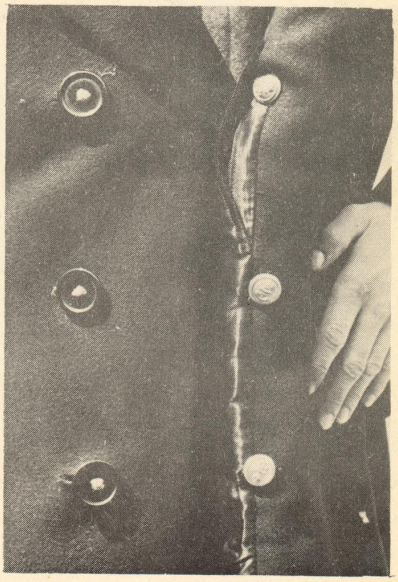


Printing press.

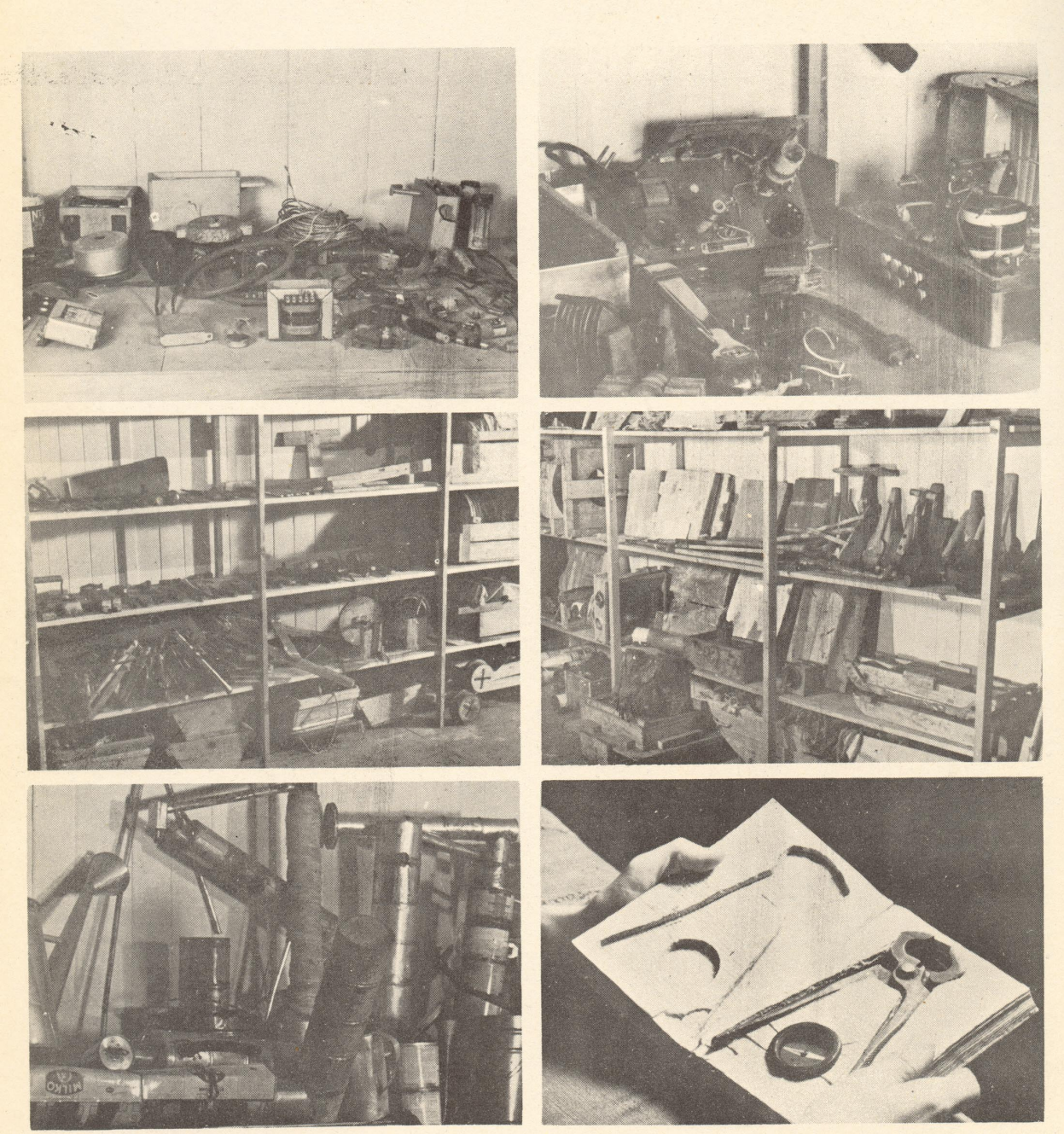


Charlie, tunnel hunting with the water hose.

Overcoat equiped for quick change from military to civilian buttons.



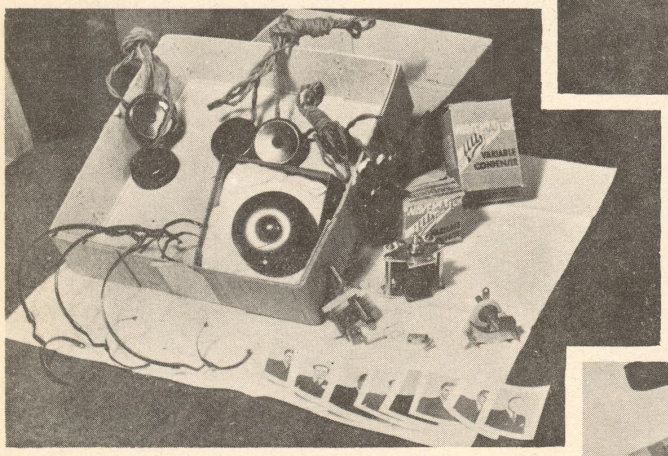
Escape Items from Official German Files



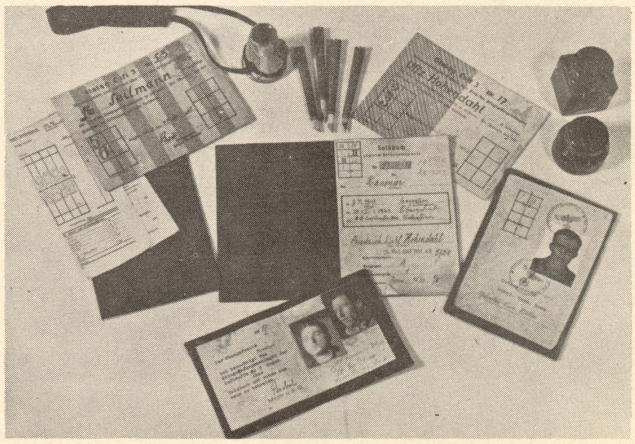
Museum of escaping and tunnel material maintained by the German Security Section.

Escape Items from Official German Files

Left & below.
A parcel and its contents. One of the special parcels the Germans uncovered.



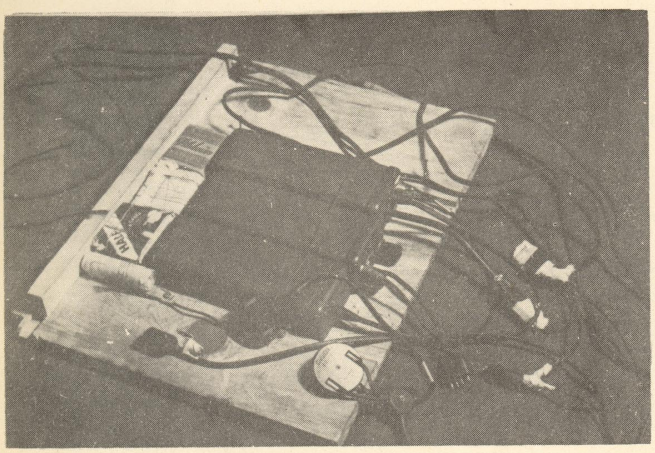
Left, Another special parcel.



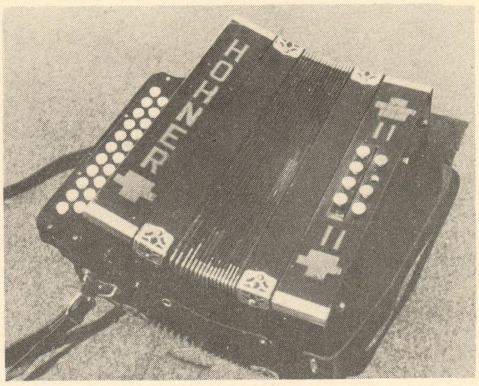
Right,
This photograph shows the documents made by the forgery departments "Dean & Dawson" for an escaping officer.

Escape Items from Official German Files

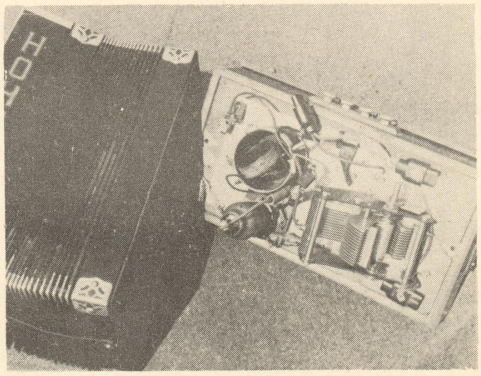
Escape Items from Official German Files



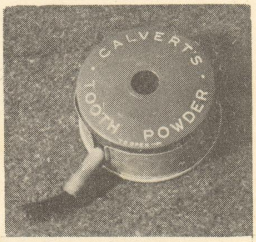
Radio receiving set concealed under floor of wooden locker.



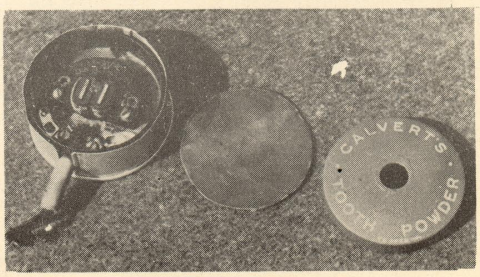
Another hidden radio set.



Earphone in light switch.



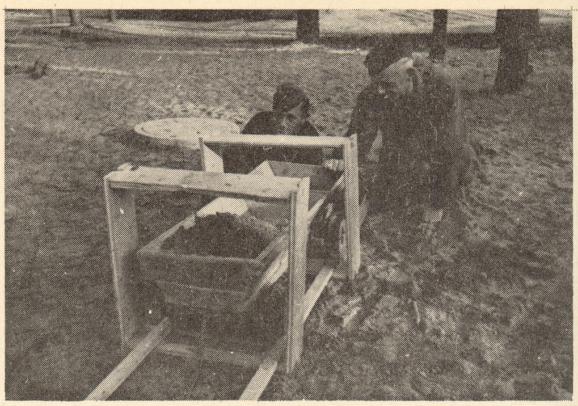
Earphone.



Escape Items from Official German Files

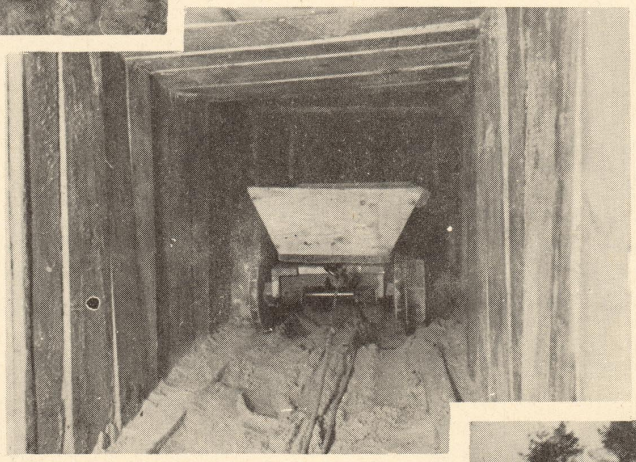
Escape Items from Official German Files

Tom and Harry



Trolley and position of bed slats for shoring.

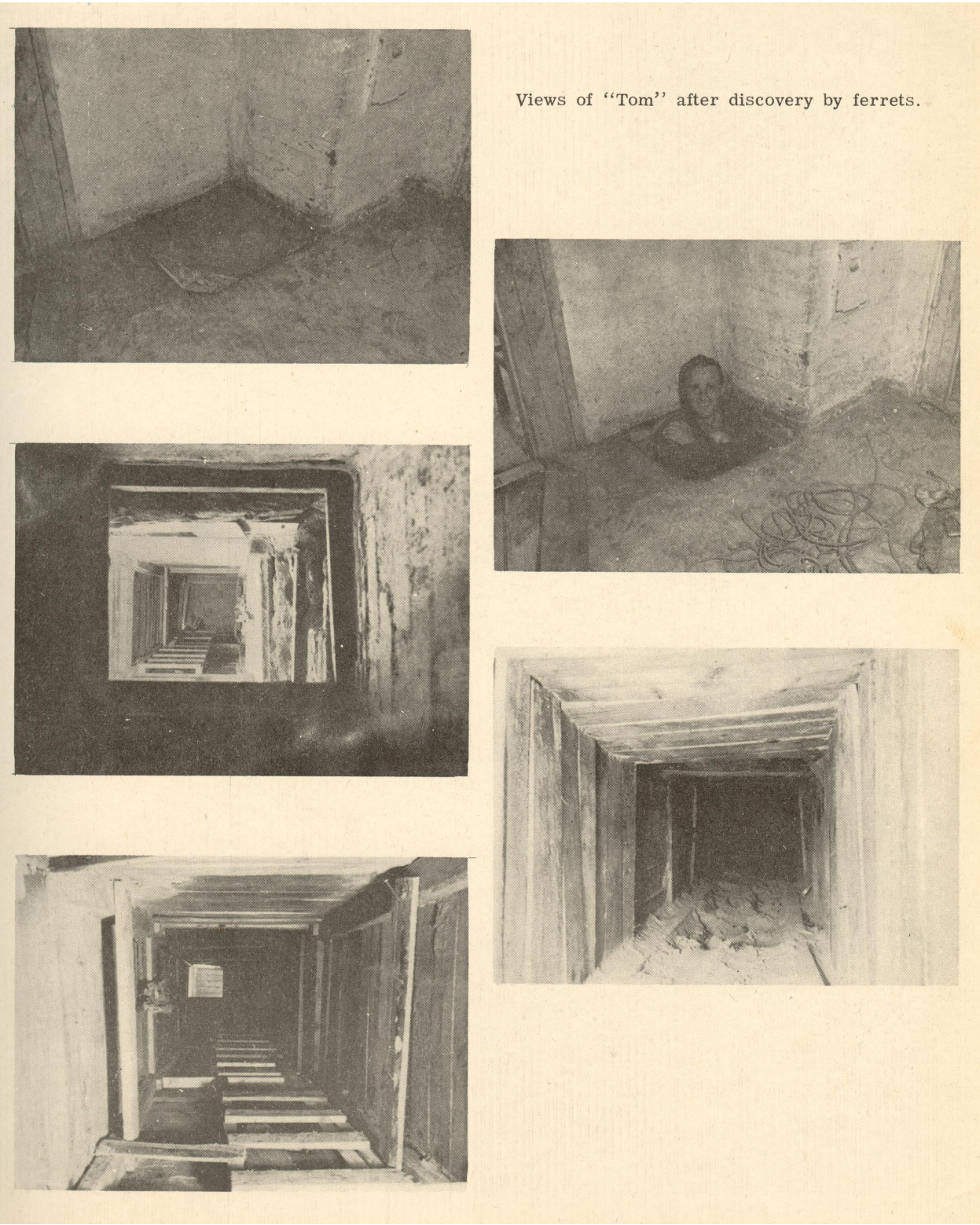
Robert demonstrates tunnel air pump.



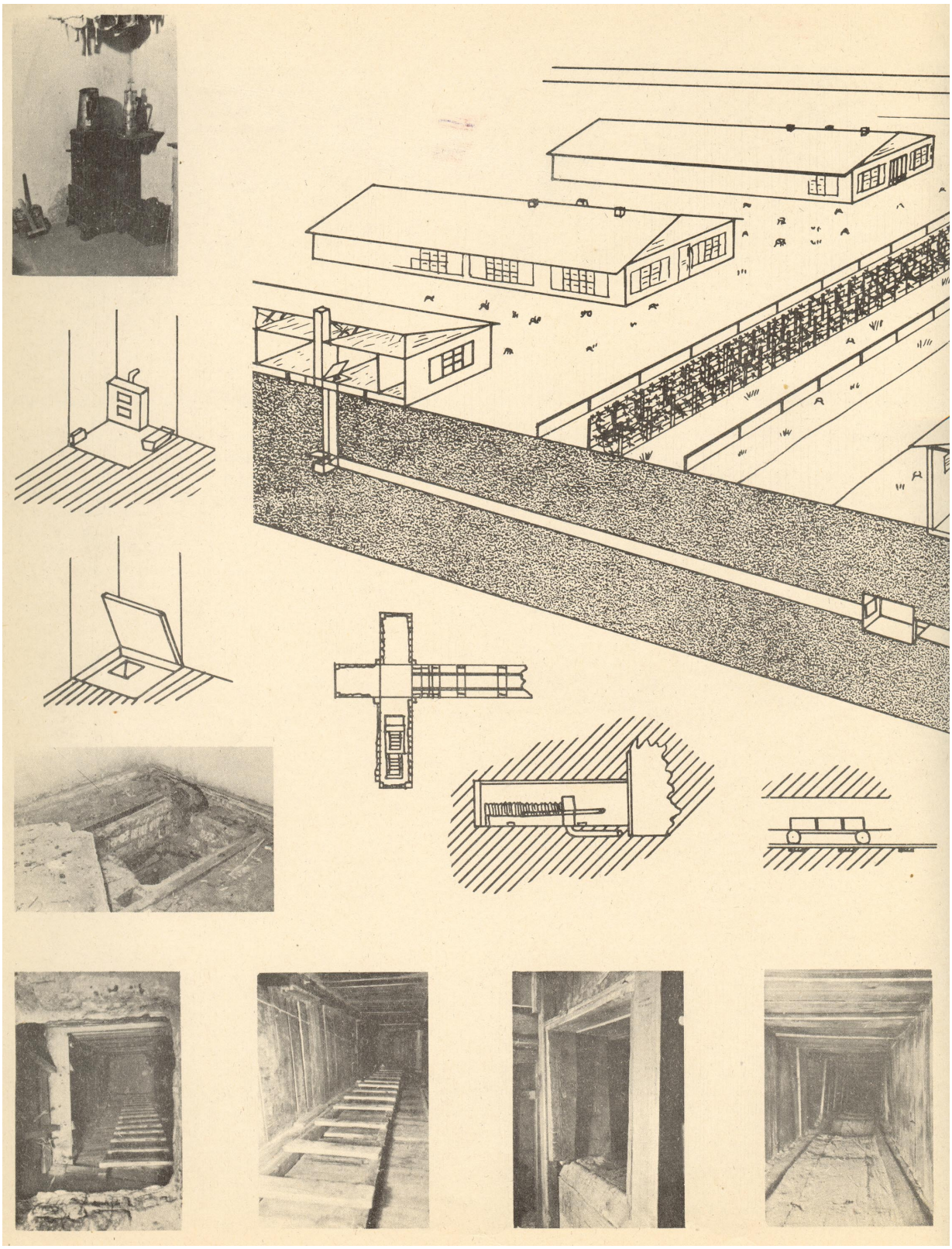
Ferret demonstrates how the penguins carried their sand disposal sacks.

How to make pipes for air supply in tunnel

Escape Items from Official German Files

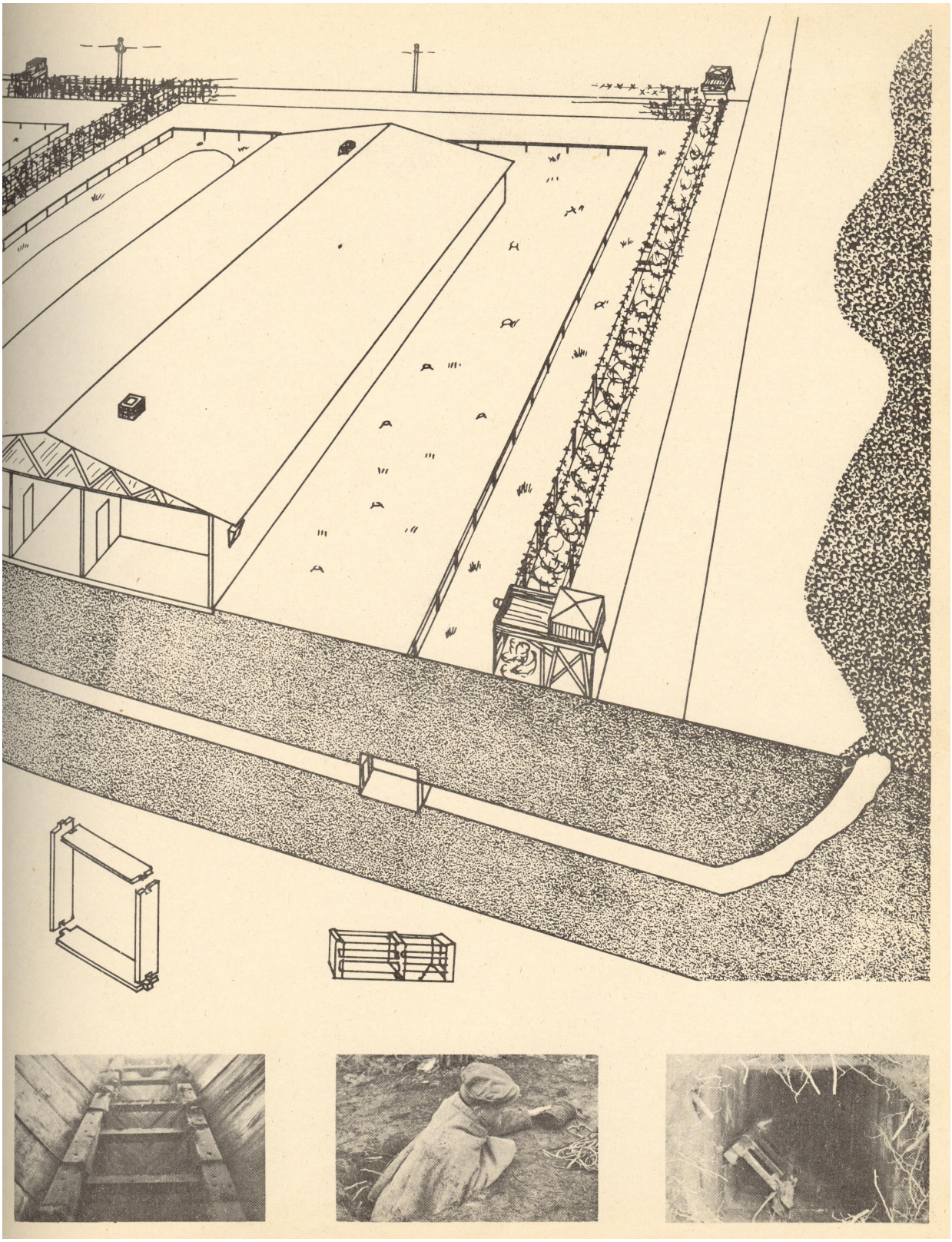


Tunnel "TOM" Discovered by the Germans Before Completion



Tunnel "HARRY" Used by Seventy-Five British Officers in the "Great Escape"

(First of two plates showing camp orientation)



Tunnel "HARRY" Used by Seventy-Five British Officers in the "Great Escape"

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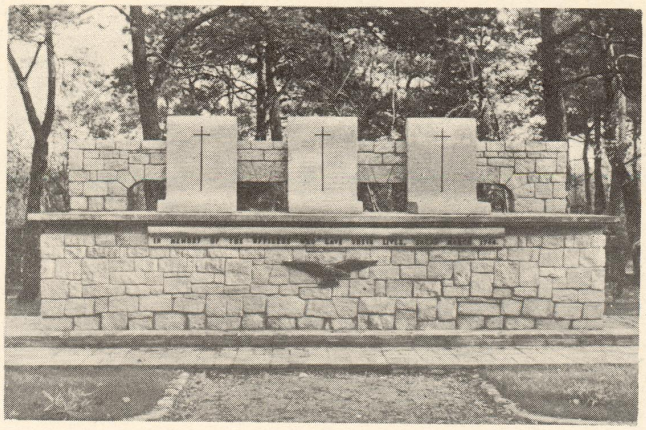
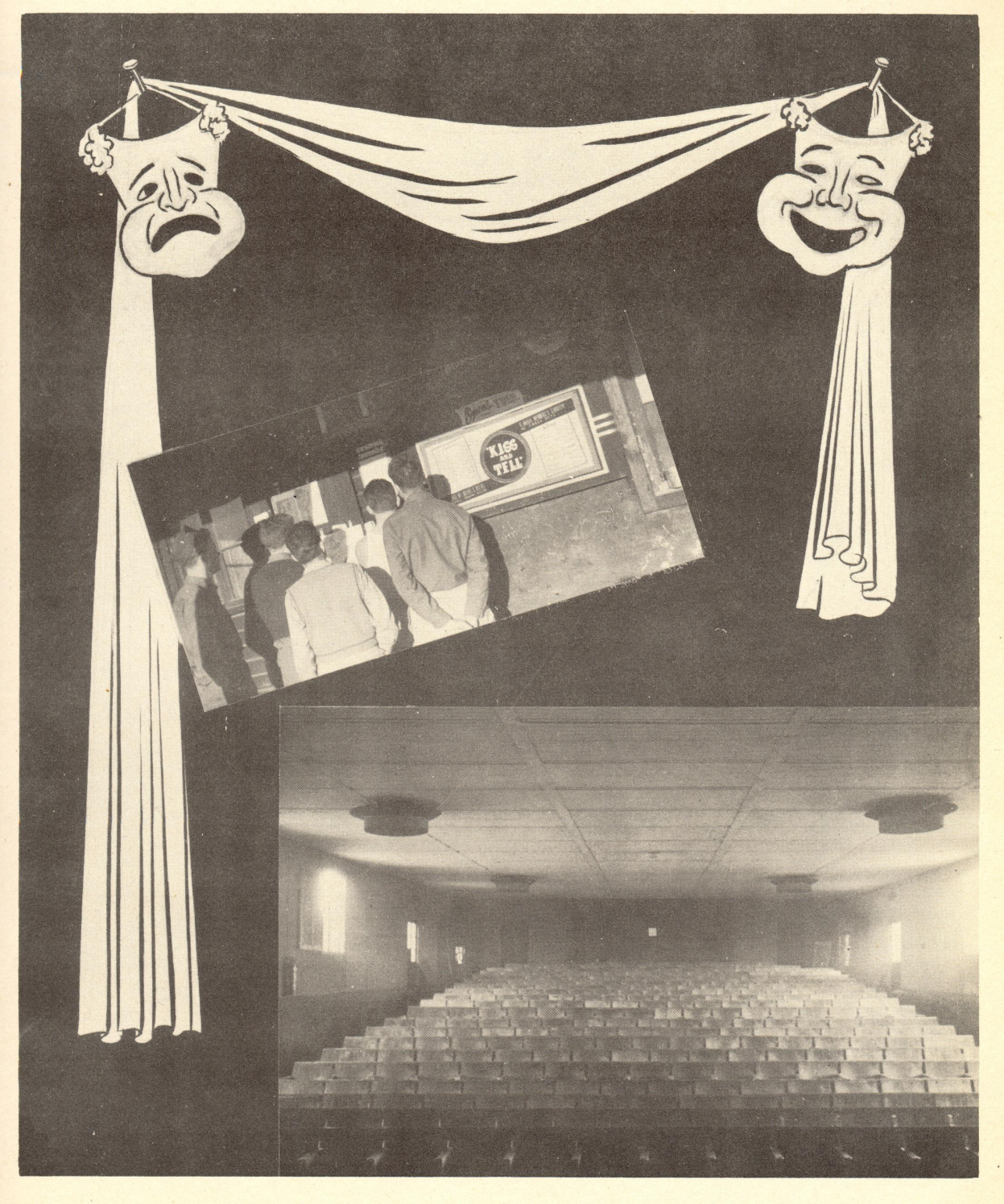
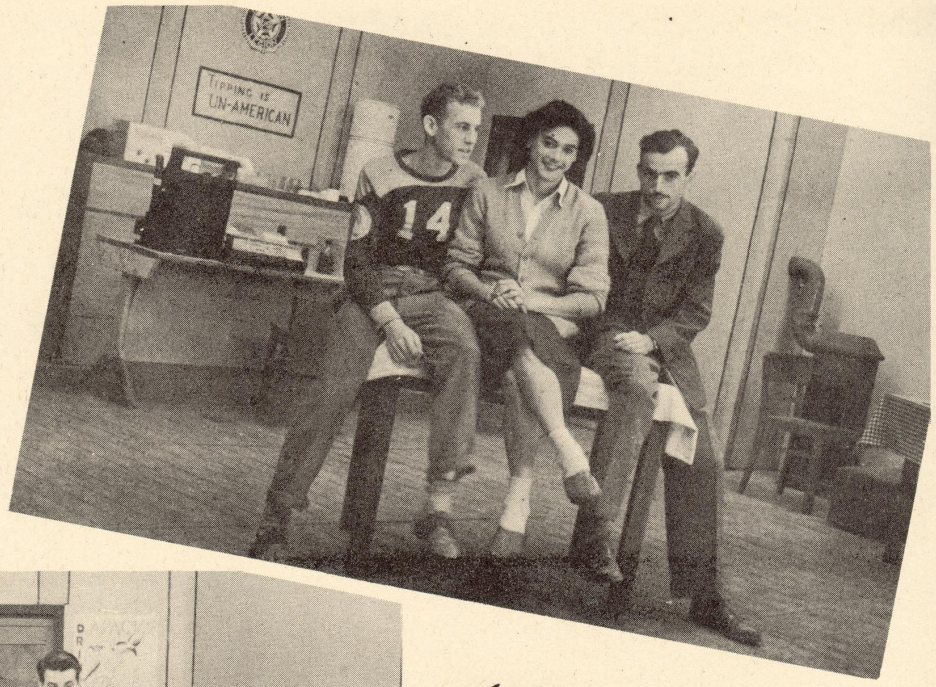


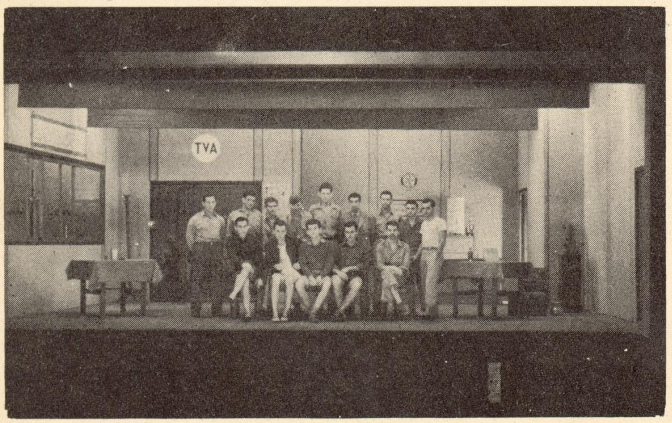
Memorial of these men designed and built by their fellow prisoners in the Military Cemetary at Sagan.

Names and photographs of the fifty British prisoners shot after their recapture.



Theater Activities





PETRIFIED

FOREST

FRONT PAGE


Re-elect
HARTMAN
SHERIFF
VOTE FOR
Fred
THOMPSON


Re-elect
HARTMAN
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Re-elect
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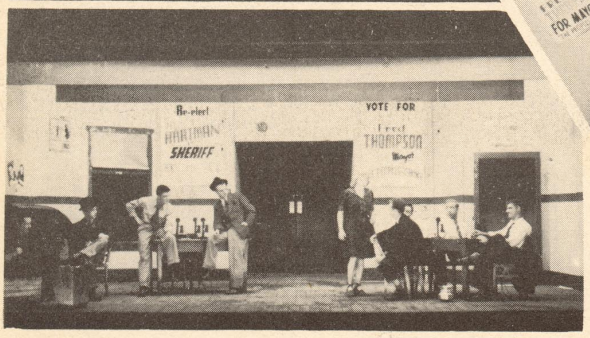
THOMPSON


Re-elect
HARTMAN
SHERIFF
VOTE FOR
Fred
THOMPSON


SHERIFF
FOR MAYOR

kids and teen

U. S. EDITION
NUMBER 1
MONDAY, APRIL 10

THE CIRCUIT

SOUTH COMPOUND

GEPRÜFT 41

STALAG LUFT III
SAGAN, GERMANY
MONDAY, APRIL 10

RELIGIOUS SERVICE HELD IN THEATRE

PASTORS TEACH ETHICS, PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Religion is a vital part of Kriegie life. Both Protestant and Roman Catholic services are held each Sunday in the camp theatre.

Padre Murdo MacDonald, a Scottish pastor captured while serving with the British paratroops in Africa, is "unofficial" cheplain for the south compound. Protestant services are under his leadership as well as a discussion group and Bible Study class. The Padre also teaches a session in psychology and philosophy.

Father Goudreau, a French Canadian priest taken from the sinking "Zambeyi" in the early part of the war while enroute to missionary work in Africa, cares for the spiritual needs of the Roman Catholic officers and men. He divides his time between this and another camp. In addition Father Goudreau conducts a weekly ethics class.

Services have recently been enhanced by the addition of an altar cross and floral pieces, the contributions of Don Stine, Alameda, Calif., and J.M. Diffley, Birmingham.

OTHER CAMP PUBLICATIONS HAVE SHORT DURATIONS

The CIRCUIT had not been long in publication when the American spirit of competition prompted the appearance of two other news sheets, "The Shaft," and "The New Yorker," the latter fashioned on the U.S. publication of the same title. Their run was brief but brilliant.

"The Shaft" was printed by hand and appeared weekly. The cartoons and prose of Joseph Boyle, Ten Eyck, N.J., assisted by Norman Retchin, Barrington, Ill., provided more humor than the conservative news coverage of The CIRCUIT.

Del Ray of Buffalo, N.Y. fathered "The New Yorker," writing and typing two entire issues.

EDITORIAL

Through these composite publications we endeavor to bring you greetings from a community of Americans, and in the pages to set the temper of our existence.

Introspection suffers with intimacy, and it is not our wish to decry our position any further than to offer a smile for worried next-of-kin and a tolerant smirk on super sanquine bestowers of "country club" tags.

Suffice it to say that speakers, musicians, writers, artists, actors, men who were none of these but are learning to be - all are using these days to build a world of mind that embraces tolerance and ability to work together.

We hope to make the "home" editions a periodical function and thus send ourselves factually to you.

By means of this simple expedient, we say - and in the echo are unspoken hopes - "Hello," American style.

FOUR FILMS SHOWN SINCE SEPTEMBER

GERMAN "GINGER ROGERS" STARS IN TWO MUSICALS

Four motion pictures have been provided for prisoners since the opening of the south compound last September

Marika Rökk, "Germany's Ginger Rogers" starred in two musical comedies provided by the Reich.

The American pictures were "Shall We Dance" starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and the Katharine Hepburn Cary Grant comedy, "Bringing Up Baby."

E.F. Schrupp, Young America Minn. acts as interpreter of the German movies for a none too spellbound audience.

OUT OF THE MAILBAG

Fremont, Neb. - "Do you have enough money or do you want me to send some in a money order?"

H.H. Van Anda

Chicago - "Your copy of the new Sears Roebuck catalogue has possibly already reached you.

"It isn't always possible for a member of our Army to reach a shopping center, but with our catalogue it is a simple matter."

Captain J.W. Swanson

KRIEGIE LYRICAL NEEDS SUPPLIED IN VARIED FORMS

SING-SONGS PAVE WAY FOR CHORUS AND SWING BANDS

Music ranks high in entertainment value for all POW's. It is supplied in many and various forms.

Before the organization of the bands and chorus, sing-songs, led by Tex Newton, accompanied by a few guitars, were held in the open air, indoors during colder weather.

Four YMCA phonographs, a set of records with each, passing from room to room, serve fourteen barracks.

A larger audience heard recordings upon delivery of an amplifying system shared with neighboring camps.

Norm Simpson and Oran Highley organized a chorus of forty who presented a Christmas program, and had a large part in the musical revue.

Band instruments serve double duty. They are used alike by the Luftbandsters, under the direction of Major Hal Diamond and a junior jazz band called the Swinging Troubadours, led by Tex Ellis.

CURRENT EVENTS ROOM SOURCE OF WORLD NEWS

Kriegies rely for their news on the German newspapers and a Reich loud speaker recently installed on the cook-house wall. Additionally, a paper in English published by the Germans for American POW's, brings summaries of foreign news plus sports items and local news from the States.

As only a small portion of prisoners can read German, most important articles from the papers are translated into English and posted beside explanatory maps in the "gen" news-room in the theatre building.

The majority of the work in keeping news up to date falls to Edward McMillan, Philadelphia, J.H. Embach, Phoenix, Ariz. and A.J. Schmidt, Vineland, N.J.

CAMP ORGAN MAKES DEBUT OCT. 6, 1943

BULLETIN STYLE, THE CIRCUIT APPEARS THREE TIMES WEEKLY

The need of an organ to disseminate camp news and collect a somewhat meager store of "home" information was answered October 6, 1943 by the CIRCUIT, south camp's tri weekly.

Typed in form imitative of U.S. dailies and with lettered in heads, the single issue is posted on the cook-house wall, by custom the lager bulletin board.

Motiveting force behind the CIRCUIT has been and is Ollie Chiesl of Chicago. Through him, as well as another Chicagoan Capt. Deadman, and L.J. Hawley, Berkeley, Calif., has the compound's only newspaper assumed the task of reporting, criticizing, reminding - in brief, aiding readers to find an optimum basis for adjustment.

Post-war reproduction of our CIRCUIT issues is planned.

Departments of theatre, sports, literary, and band are managed by Joe Klaas, Seattle, R.M. Rahner, N.Y., Sam Dorrance, Brooklyn, and Sgt. Graves, Council Bluffs, Ia. Deadman covers the military situation with lucid comments reared of years service with the "Times" foreign desk.

Essential art work is in the facile hands of Ben Smotherman, Fort Worth, Frank Meyers, Cleveland, Ed Allen, Houston, and L.F. Hamaker, Santa Ana, Calif. Smotherman's "Penny", a cartoon depicting adventures of a girl correspondent in the ETO, appears during the week, while Meyers' droll "Looie" cavorts on the weekly Sunday comic page along with "Hercules, the Pup," by Allen. Cpl. Gilker, New York City has contributed skillful portraits and landscape sketches.

Invaluable in repertorial capacities are Robert Katz, Honnesdale, Pa., Joe Hudson, Little Rock, Ark., C. L. Farnhurt, Lebanon, Ohio, Charles Goldschmid, N.Y.C., George Vasil, Spokane, Wash., C.C. Dartt, Oneonta, N.Y., L.C. Brown, Albuquerque, N.M. and W.L. Barker, Indianapolis. Among the latters' jobs is the collecting of mail items used in "Out of the Mailbag."

American POW's in Germany refer to themselves as Kriegies.

It's an abbreviation of the German, "Kriegsgefangener," war prisoner, which the Americans and British found too hard to pronounce.

STAFF

S.A.O., Stalag Luft III	Col. Alkire, San Francisco, Cal.
S.A.O., South Camp	Col. Goodrich, Augusta, Ga.
Executive	Lt.Col. Clark, San Antonio, Texas.
Adjutant	Lt.Col. McNickle, Doland, S.D.
Education, Entertainment	Lt.Col. Klocko, Miami Beach, Fla.
Theatre	Major Houston, Dundalk, Md.
Music	Major Diamond, Van Nuys, Calif.
Kitchen	Capt. Shuck, Lewiston, Pa.
Papers	Capt. Frost, Oak Park, Ill.
Mail	Capt. Carmichael, Maryville, Mo.
Sanitation	Capt. Smithwick, Palm Spgs., Cal.
Chaplain	Capt. MacDonald, Portree, Scotland.
Medical	Capt. Daniel, Spokane, Wash.
Parcels	Capt. Williams, Marietta, Ohio.
Interpreter	Lt. Schrupp, Young America, Minn.

PENNY

By Ben Smotherman

Stalag Luft III Newspaper

October 23, 1944

Volume 2 No. 1

THE CIRCUIT

SOUTH COMPOUND

GEPRÜFT 115

Stalag Luft III

Sagan, Germany

SOUTH CAMP'S STATION KRGY AIRS FEATURES FAMILIAR TO P.O.W.'s

JIM AUBELE, DICK ROSS

HEAD STUDIO STAFF

It's 4,000 miles as the "Big Ones" fly, from Sagan, Germany to the throbbing heart of the entertainment world which feeds "all four" radio networks of America from studios high above Manhattan.

But here "behind the wire," standard American broadcasts have spanned the miles to bring music, drama, news and education to POWs who are thereby transported from South Theatre to the familiar haunts of home.

It's amazing what can be done with a few YMCA records, a baby upright piano, an assortment of camp talent, and the day's German communique.

These are skilfully built into the day's program structure by Director Jim Aubele of WHK-WCLE, Cleveland, whipped into shape by Continuity Chief Dick "Ross" Rossignol, of Mutual Hollywood and produced by voices coached by Chief Announcer Ted Brown of Roanoke's WSLS.

Technical problems involving the Y M C A sound equipment were worked out by D.H.Carey and Don Murchie.

The staff includes such capables as Bill Nance, Jack Mann, Kurt Langberg, Ray Rahner, Joe Rose, Lee Pilert, Jim Roberts and John Torland all voices behind the scenes of that familiar ringing phrase:

"KRGY, an overseas division of the American Broadcasting System."

F.J. Natoli

A girl

Born in July

ED BAXLEY'S COLLECTION OF "EX'S" MOUNTS WITH OCTOBER'S BIG MAIL

ABSENCE DOESN'T ALWAYS MAKE THE HEART GROW FONDER

Gentlemen may prefer blondes, but it's the brunettes who are putting the prod to our dashing young airmen at South Camp.

On the wall above Ed Baxley's sack, pasted row upon row, are snapshots, colored portraits and even a picture of a bride in her wedding gown.

Brunettes predominate in Ed's gallery of "ex's", photos of gals whose ardor have cooled while sweating our boys out.

He started this collection of "impatient maidens" when his roommate C.W. Cook received word from his "fiancee's" father that she'd upped and married another. Ed got her photo.

Other Kriegies who were jilted soon beat a path to Baxley's door and the collection grew.

October's mail brought more "Dear Lootenant" letters. (An epistle usually written by some well meaning relative that starts like this: "I suppose that you have already heard about..."). And so, the gallery was increased by several new faces.

One photo, an 8 x 10 portrait, never made Ed's collection. Arriving in the morning mail, followed by a "Dear Lootenant" letter in the afternoon, it was torn up and thrown in the stove, unlamented, by the forsaken POW.

PARCELS UP!

After a two months absence personal parcels from next of kin made a re-appearance.

Although 750 were distributed in 15 days, many more have arrived at the Sagan depot and increased the already large pile awaiting censorship.

TURKEY FOR CHRISTMAS

The Christmas Red Cross food parcels will include canned turkey.

NEIGHBORS IN BUFFALO, N.Y. FOR A YEAR; TWO AIRMEN MEET FIRST TIME IN CAMP

NYGAARD AND KOCH

NOW LIVE IN SAME ROOM

Although they were next door neighbors in Buffalo, N. Y. for a year, two flying officers met in Stalag Luft III for the first time.

They are Dan Nygaard who's logged 22 months Kriegie time and Chester Koch, who was forced down last Feb. 25.

Released from the hospital last month, Koch arrived in South Compound and was assigned a bunk in Nygaard's room.

It wasn't long until they were swapping home town recollections.

"I don't see why we didn't meet before," said Koch. "We can describe each others house and I even recall seeing Dan's car parked out in front."

GAL INVADES PRISONER OF WAR RANKS

FLYING NURSE SENT TO MEINIGEN

The Staff of Meinigen, a POW hospital southwest of Liepzig is richer by one Lt. Whittle of the American Flying Nurse Corps.

She's a blue-eyed blonde from Rock Sprgs. Texas and was forced down near Aschen while helping to evacuate wounded in a C 47, early this September.

HAD HIS NUMBER

A piece of flak removed from the leg of an American flying officer who had been wounded, in a recent raid, had three figures engraved on its upper surface.

These figures were identical with the last three digits of his serial number.

"ROOM SERVICE" NEXT

"Room Service" a comedy produced and directed by Harry Joe Murphy will follow the Band Show on the South Theatre stage.

"DUSTY" RUNNER'S LUFTBANDSTERS "A CONCERT IN JAZZ" CURRENT SOUTH THEATRE ATTRACTION

Arrangements of eight name bands, Clinton, James, Hines, Miller, Shaw, Goodman, Savitt, and Basie, form the nucleus of 22 numbers played by "Dusty" Runner and the Luftbandsters in their presentation of "A Concert in Jazz."

Long remembered will be:

"Doug" Douglas's bass boogie patterns in "St. Louis Blues", "Greezil" Grezlak's single string "electric" guitar picking of "Roseroom"; "Swede" Sederberg's fast string bass ad lib "Honeysuckle Rose" [illegible]

and drummer "Dropatick" Graves short breaks throughout the show.

"Dad" Simpson and "Mick" Mickleson in the trombone section stand out as a seperate unit in "Back Base Shuffle" and "Shadow" Sinnamon's "Harvard Blues" is a vocal and gut bucket classic.

Vibrating in Kriegie memories:

Dick Jones' vivid interpretations in "Ciri Biri Bin", "Tiger" Penn's soaring "In the Mood" drive, and Spence Gulick's dependable [illegible] trumpet section.

Unforgettable will be:

Frank "Peachtree" Murphy's many solos, especially "Tuxedo Junction"; Cliff McCoy's fine clarinet work on "What is This Thing Called Love" calling for more McCoy; Lee Forsblad's hot tenor solos particularly in "Every Tub"; "White Hope" McCord's "Trains in the Night" with the off-beat clap and skat back ground; and "Epsom" Salz' contrapuntal progressions supplying body to the "B-19" fugue.

The novel effects attained in "Honeysuckle Rose" and "Whispering" by "Dusty's" new Cropduster septet is a three part harmony arrangement written by Douglas from his piano improvisation on the melodies.

Our boy Runner is a triple threat in this show — he M. C.'s the entire concert, leads the band, vocalizes and rides his trumpet high throughout the show.

36,736 LETTERS MAKES NEW COMPOUND RECORD

October's mail bash has promised to break all records.

With the month only three quarters gone the number of letters received has reached 36,736. The previous high month was last July, when 26,440 pieces of mail came in during the full four weeks period.

Biggest mail day was October 14 with 7,002 letters and on October 7, the previous record day, 4,511 letters reached South Compound prisoners.

The most timely letter was received by B. W. Caruso dated September thirtieth.

This year the chorus will present Handel's "Messiah", an oratorio which will be sung during Christmas week.

OUT OF THE MAILBAG . . . . . .

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

May 28, a Kriegie's girl friend writes: "I just can't help but feel it will not be long until we are together again."

May 29, the following day she says: "If you are there next winter I think I shall have to find something to do with my spare time."

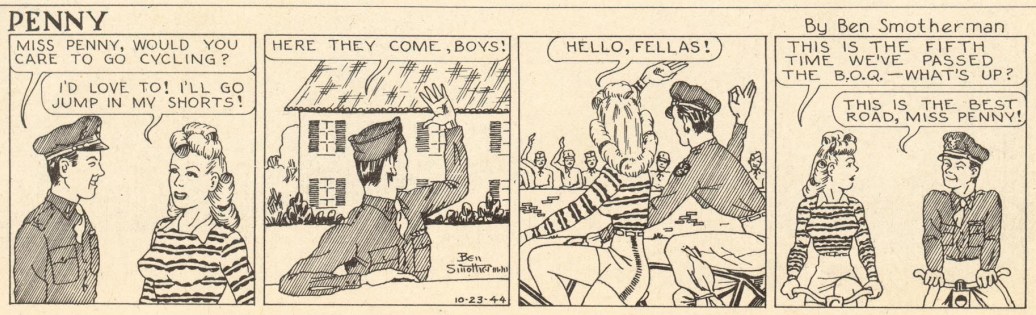
CHANGING MOODS

In an August letter a sister writes: "Will be seeing you in a couple of weeks."

In September she sent a Christmas card.

ROUGH

And from a civilian correspondent we learn, "Life is pretty dull in the States. It's the same thing one year after another."



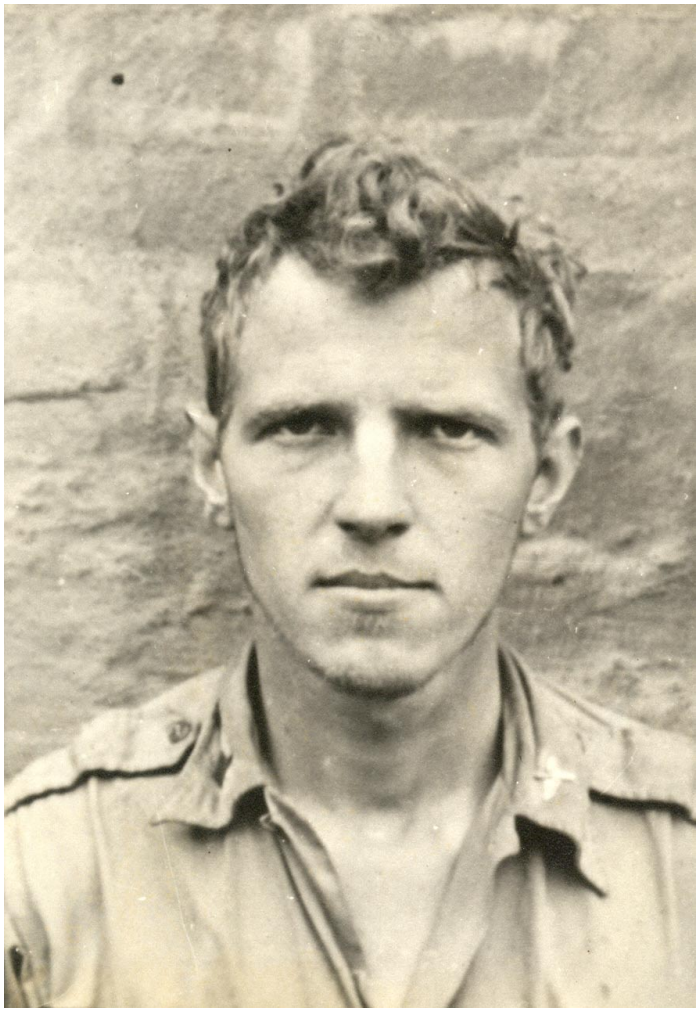
Stalag Luft III Newspaper

Arts and Crafts Display Room


NOTICE
Sound
EQUIPMENT
ONLY


NOTICE
Sound
EQUIPMENT
ONLY


NOTICE
Sound
EQUIPMENT
ONLY



Nov 12

PRISONER OF WAR POST
KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST
SERVICE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

AFFIX
G.P.O.
53

RANK AND NAME (CAPITAL LETTERS) 2nd LT. WESLEY L. JULE
UNITED STATES PRISONER OF WAR.

PRISONER OF WAR No. 6611
(SEE NOTE ON FLAP)

CAMP NAME AND No. STALAG LUFT #3

SUBSIDIARY CAMP No.

COUNTRY GERMANY

VIA NEW YORK, N. Y.

11333
U.S. CENSOR

WRITE VERY CLEARLY WITHIN THE LINES. IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE CENSORSHIP, LETTERS SHOULD BE TYPED OR PRINTED IN BLOCK CAPITALS.

November 12, 1944

My dearest sweetheart,

Don't say it, your eyesight is perfectly alright - The ink is purple. Pretty, isn't it? My cousins fountain pen.

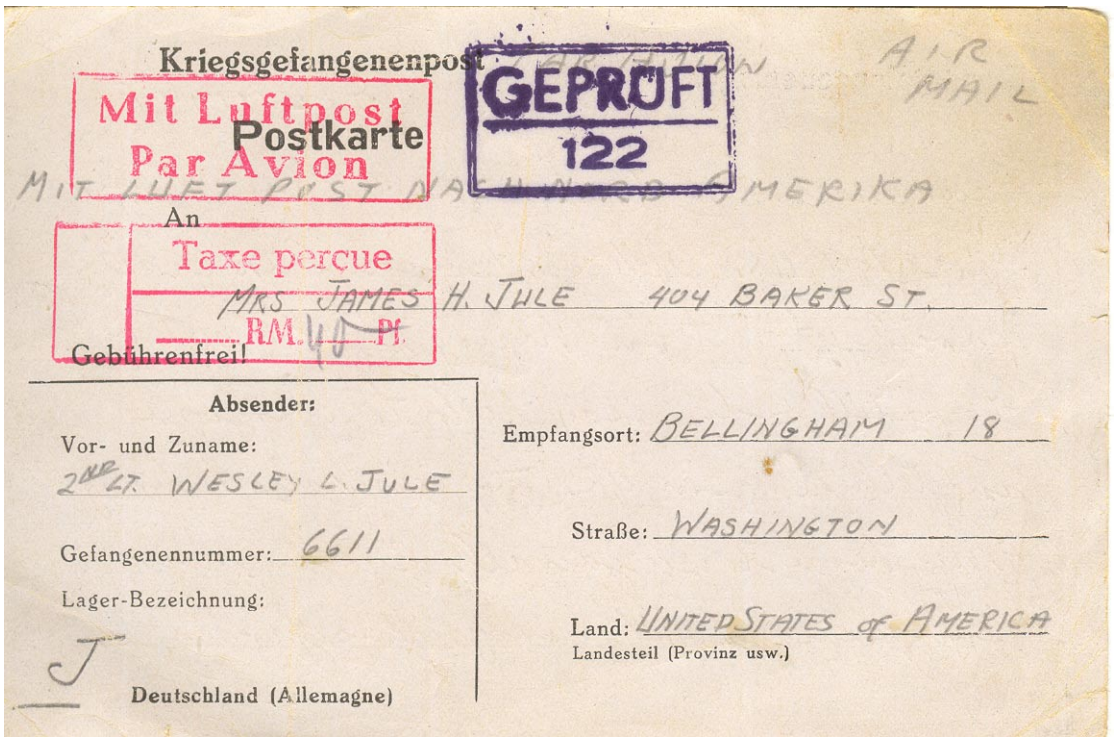
How's my honey? Okay I hope. Got your sweet, honey? I love you more everyday and I miss you an awful lot.

I've been making a list of the things I want to send to you. I think I'll send you another picture so you can have another glance at your wife. I'm still letting my hair grow but my eyes are still green. I wish they were brown, honey.

A week from tomorrow I'm going home. It will seem funny going home, it's been so long since I left. I'll be glad to see Mother + Sonny.

CONTINUE ON TOP PANEL OVERLEAF

☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1944 16—39042-1



Kriegsgefangenenpost

Mit Luftpost
Postkarte
Par Avion

GEPRÜFT
122

AIR MAIL

MIT LUFTPOST DA[illegible] AMERIKA

An

Taxe percue
RM. 40 Pf.

MRS JAMES H. JULE 404 BAKER ST.

Gebührenfrei!

Absender:

Vor- und Zuname:
2ND LT. WESLEY L. JULE

Gefangenennummer: 6611

Lager-Bezeichnung:

J

Deutschland (Allemagne)

Empfangsort: BELLINGHAM 18

Straße: WASHINGTON

Land: UNITED STATES of AMERICA
Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: Dec 7, 1944

Dear mother & Dad, just to let you know
I'm still OK. I haven't recieved the first
parcel yet but I'm hoping it will not be
long till I do. Say hello to everyone
and tell them I'm O.K. too. and love to hear
from home to see you all. Bye for now
and please don't worry. Love, Your son, Wes

PRISONERS OF WAR BULLETIN

Published by the American National Red Cross for the Relatives of American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees

VOL. 2, NO. 4 WASHINGTON, D. C. APRIL 1944

The Red Cross Fleet

The *S. S. Caritas II,* the latest addition to the Red Cross transatlantic fleet, left Philadelphia for Marseille in March on her maiden voyage under the neutral flag of Switzerland. Like the *Caritas I,* which entered the Red Cross service about a year ago, she has been acquired by the International Committee of the Red Cross to speed the delivery of food packages, medical supplies, and clothing to American and other United Nations prisoners of war in European camps. Formerly the freighter *Spokane,* of 4,965 deadweight tons, *Caritas II* was built in Denmark. She is the first vessel provided by the United States to the Red Cross for use exclusively in prisoner of war service, and was furnished through the constantly helpful collaboration of the United States War Shipping Administration.

Prior to the acquisition of *Caritas II,* the latest addition to the Red Cross fleet had been the new motorship *Mangalore,* which left Philadelphia for Marseille on her maiden voyage toward the end of January with the largest cargo of prisoner of war relief supplies ever to leave the United States. The cargo, which was shipped by the American and Canadian Red Cross societies, comprised every essential need of a prisoner of war from needles to medicines, clothing, and food packages, and amounted in all to nearly 5,500 tons of supplies, having a value of approximately $5,000,000. It also included about 2,000 bags of prisoner of war letter and parcel mail.

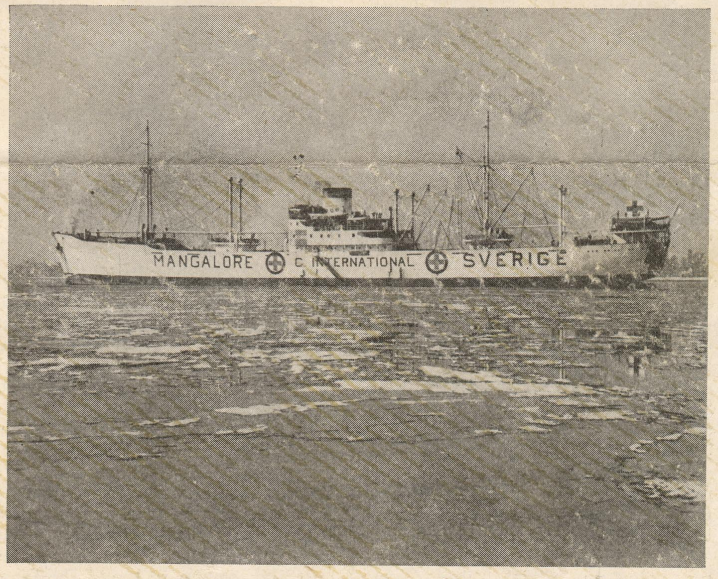
The *Mangalore* was recently built in Sweden and flies the Swedish flag. Her crew is also Swedish, and she is under charter to the Swiss Shipping Foundation of the International Committee of the Red Cross at Geneva. The *Mangalore* is not only the largest vessel in the Red Cross service—she is also the fastest. She completed her first run from Philadelphia to Marseille in 17 days.

In all, seven ships are now making regular trips between the United States and Europe, carrying exclusively Red Cross cargo and mail for prisoners of war and civilian internees. Four of the seven ships are under charter to the British Red Cross. The British and American Red Cross societies guarantee the financial operation of these ships, all seven of which are used jointly to carry goods from the American and Canadian Red Cross societies. This fleet is apart from the Swedish-owned *Gripsholm,* which has made two voyages to the East and one to Europe in effecting exchanges of nationals. On each voyage relief supplies for prisoners of war and civilian internees were transported.

Special Protection

The Red Cross vessel, traveling alone and without convoy, is especially protected. She is fully lighted at night in all waters; she flies a neutral flag and carries a neutral crew. She bears the insignia of the Red Cross on her sides and decks. She has on board a *convoyeur* who is the direct representative of the International Committee and must be a Swiss. Her arrivals and departures

(Continued on page 10)



The new Motorship "Mangalore" reaching Philadelphia last January on her first crossing of the Atlantic

To all Prisoners of War!

The escape from prison camps is no longer a sport!

Germany has always kept to the Hague Convention and only punished recaptured prisoners of war with minor disciplinary punishment.

Germany will still maintain these principles of international law.

But England has besides fighting at the front in an honest manner instituted an illegal warfare in non combat zones in the form of gangster commandos, terror bandits and sabotage troops even up to the frontiers of Germany.

They say in a captured secret and confidential English military pamphlet,

THE HANDBOOK OF MODERN IRREGULAR WARFARE:

". . . the days when we could practise the rules of sportsmanship are over. For the time being, every soldier must be a potential gangster and must be prepared to adopt their methods whenever necessary."

"The sphere of operations should always include the enemy's own country, any occupied territory, and in certain circumstances, such neutral countries as he is using as a source of supply."

England has with these instructions opened up a non military form of gangster war!

Germany is determined to safeguard her homeland, and especially her war industry and provisional centres for the fighting fronts. Therefore it has become necessary to create strictly forbidden zones, called death zones, in which all unauthorised trespassers will be immediately shot on sight.

Escaping prisoners of war, entering such death zones, will certainly lose their lives. They are therefore in constant danger of being mistaken for enemy agents or sabotage groups.

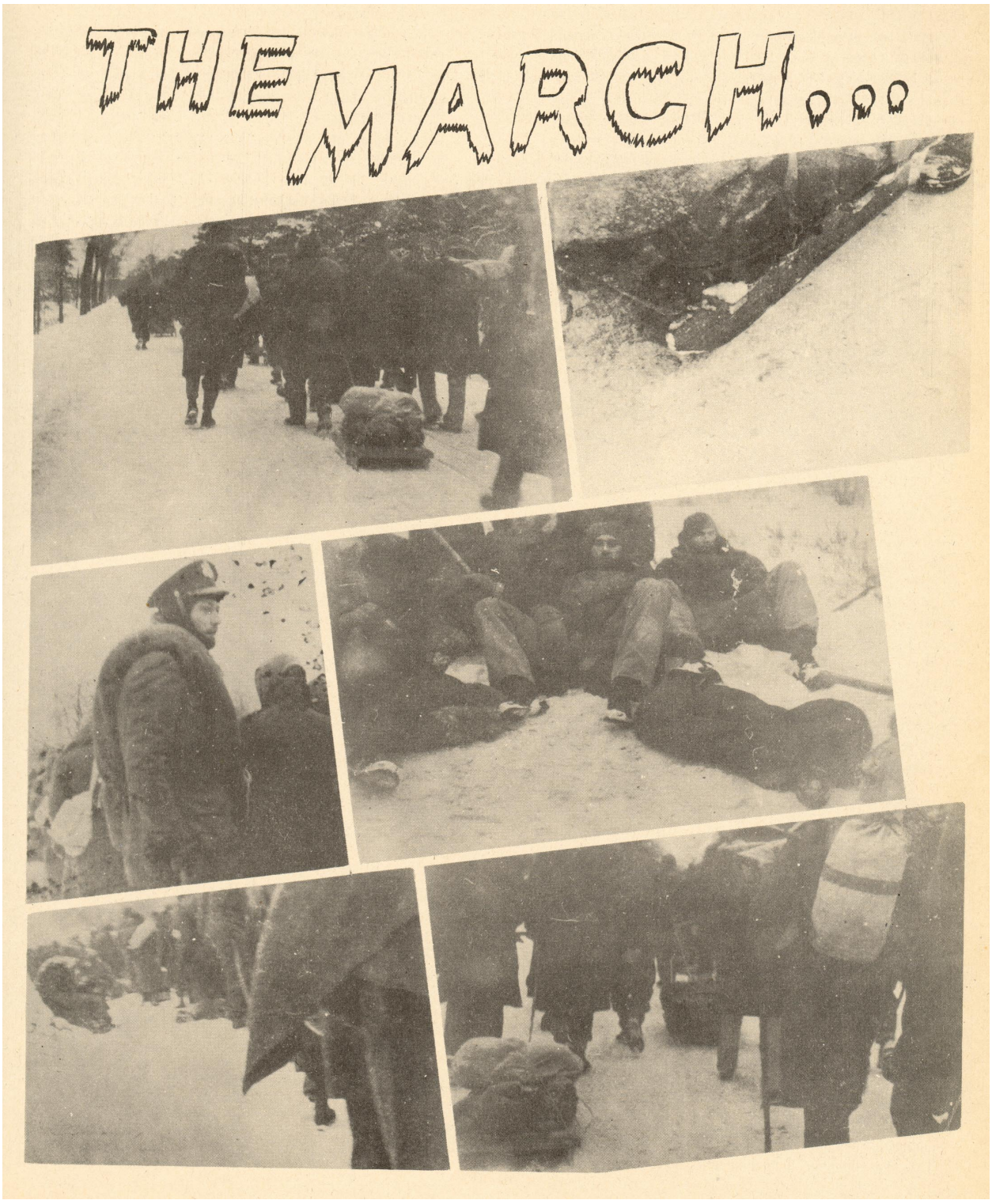
Urgent warning is given against making future escapes!

In plain English: Stay in the camp where you will be safe! Breaking out of it is now a damned dangerous act.

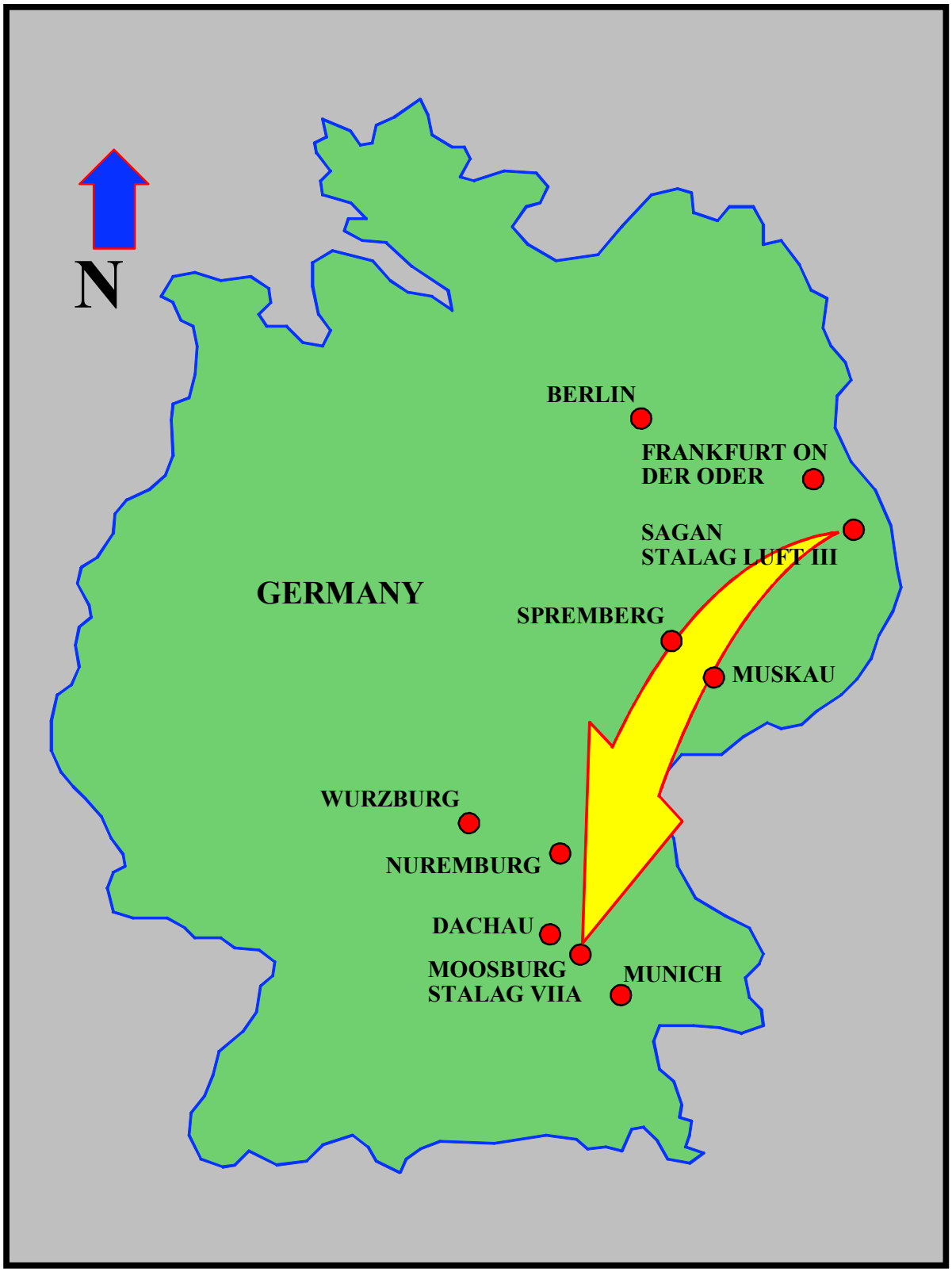
The chances of preserving your life are almost nil!

All police and military guards have been given the most strict orders to shoot on sight all suspected persons.

Escaping from prison camps has ceased to be a sport!



January 1945


N
BERLIN
FRANKFURT ON
DER ODER
SAGAN
STALAG LUFT III
GERMANY
SPREMBERG
MUSKAU
WURZBURG
NUREMBURG
DACHAU
MOOSBURG
STALAG VIIA
MUNICH

The March

Chapter VIII

The first couple hours of the march went well, with lots of joking and singing. But, by the time several hours had passed, that all had changed. Packs were getting heavy and extra weight was being discarded. By that time, the soles of my G.I. shoes had come loose clear back to the heels and were flapping open with each step. I thought I would just tie them up with an extra pair of socks and maybe that would do. It didn't. Every hundred feet or so I had to re-tie the socks as they kept slipping off the toe. On we went with more and more items being discarded along the roadside. Pictures of loved ones, letters from home, newspapers, extra civilian clothing, including shoes, were among the numerous items. I was a little dismayed at some of the things being thrown away, especially the photos of wives and kids. Surely whoever threw them away must really be hurting. I saw my roommate (the mathematician) throwaway a pair of brown wingtipped oxfords and I was on them like a cat on a mouse -just what I needed! He wore a size twelve and I wore a nine, but that didn't matter. I stuffed the wet socks into the toes and was on my way. I wore those shoes for the next three months.

Five hours after the start of the march, we stopped for a forty-five minute rest period. Unfortunately, my portion of the column was on top of an autobahn overpass. The moon was still shining, but the wind had begun blowing briskly- At forty below zero the wind bit into the skin even though most of us huddled together behind a wall of snow and ice that had been removed from the road surface. A frequent check of faces was made to detect any signs of frostbite. At that time we were all issued a half loaf or German bread. The horses pulling the ration wagon couldn't pull the wagon up the overpass, so rations were issued to lighten the load. That half loaf of bread was our sole supply of food from the Germans for the next seven days.

Once again we were on our way, but not in formation now, just twenty-five hundred men struggling to keep on their feet. The casualties began to ascend as men started falling by the wayside, unable to go one step further. We all agreed that we must stop soon or we would perish, but that was not allowed. We marched and stumbled on another eight hours, finally stopping at a farm, which had a huge barn. It was now noon. We had been marching for thirteen hours and had covered thirty kilometers (eighteen and one half miles). We went into the barn and immediately

dropped onto the hay in the first available spot. The only thing we could do was rest. We were too tired to really sleep.

Four hours later we were rousted out for the next leg of the march. By this time, it was snowing heavily and approaching blizzard conditions. This leg was to strain every man to the maximum. The snow was about fifteen inches deep so the head of the column would trample the snow for several hundred yards and then fall back so the next group could move up to break the snow. This went on for the entire remainder of the march. Within a couple hours the wind changed to blizzard conditions. It was difficult for me to see the man in front of me, especially with the snow blowing horizontally. Casualties were really mounting as man after man collapsed on the road or in the ditch. At first we tried to help as many as we could, but soon it became evident that we were physically incapable of helping such a huge quantity of causalities. As one major pointed out to two men dragging a third, "Leave him as one casualty or keep carrying him and end up as three casualties."

By this time it was an immense problem for me to place one foot in front of the other. I told myself, "Come on Jule, get that foot up there. You can do it. You've got to do it! Maybe another sugar lump will help."

There was no semblance of marching now, just slipping, stumbling and the sound of crunching ice and snow mixed with our groans. In away, I was envious of those who lay by the side of the road or in a snow bank. They looked so comfortable and restful as they lay there dead. At the same time, I had a sense of anger towards them. Why are they not on their feet here on the road suffering the same pain and agony as I? Why did they take the easy way out? A tired body and a tired mind will do strange things. I was so tired that I gave no thought to the next three, ten or fifty feet down the road. Just placing one foot in front of the other was all that mattered.

The guards were having even more problems. Being elderly and physically unfit, they were dropping in their tracks. It was a common sight to see a guard throw his rifle, pack and grenades into a snow bank and then an American pick them up and pass the equipment around for other P.O.W.'s to carry for the guard. When a guard fell, several P.O.W.'s would pick him up and

literally carry him, even though frequent changes of "helpers" was required. Why? It was important to keep up the appearance of the guards doing their duty: one, to avoid confrontation with the civilian population and, two because we knew a guard would be executed if it were ever known he had thrown his equipment away. We also hoped for a change in the guards' attitude toward us P.O.W.'s. Even the dogs seemed to sense that their masters were in serious trouble, as they made no attempt to stop us from helping the guards. Rather, they just stayed close to their masters and walked along with the rest of us. Even now I can hear the guards muttering "Muede, muede, muede, (tired, tired, tired). That had me really confused for a while. I thought they were saying "Mother, mother."

At one point the column stopped at the outskirts of Maskau for five or ten minutes while the German officers were trying to figure out what direction to go. Then we went back to marching. Several hours later, we stopped again. This time the surroundings looked familiar. The Germans had guessed wrong and we had completely circled the city. We couldn't believe it!

At one o'clock in the morning we reached our destination for that stage of the march, a glass factory on the outskirts of Maskau. It was hard to believe that I had actually survived the previous nine hours and, in the process learned the true meaning of the will to live. That was all I had left. I'm sure the hundreds and hundreds who didn't make it I'm sure had the same will to live, but their bodies could no longer function.

By the time I entered the factory, a fire had been started in each of the three furnaces, so the building was getting warm or at least the chill was taken away. What a relief to sit down, or rather, collapse on the concrete floor. Every muscle in my body screamed for rest. I had sat there for only a few minutes when an American colonel came along saying, "There are men outside dying, get out there and bring in as many as you can." As tired as we were, we rushed to the door and backtracked along the long line of men waiting to get in. We picked up dozens and dozens of men, carried them in and laid them by the furnaces. All together I would guess perhaps two hundred men, including guards, were brought in before we reached the point where there were no more outside. Then I went back to my spot to sleep. By this time the building was warm and it was 3:00 A.M. We had marched another twenty-six kilometers (fifteen miles), not counting the

"sightseeing" tour around the city.

The Germans had scheduled us to leave early that morning, but the P.O.W.'s were having no part of that. Many of them had already hidden clubs, rocks, chunks of metal and concrete – anything that could be used as a weapon. We were not moving. The commander explained the situation to the German officers and they reached an accord that we could stay another night. In return, the commander assured the Germans that all P.O.W.'s would willingly be ready to march the next day. Thus, what could have been an ugly confrontation was avoided. Perhaps another deciding factor was that the German guards were in no condition to continue the march either.

There were approximately three hundred men flat on their backs with no feeling in the lower portion of their bodies. It was some type of paralysis caused by complete physical exhaustion, only a temporary condition. However it was one which prevented them from continuing the march, so they were left behind accompanied by the medical technician, a captain who had completed several years of medical school.

We left the glass factory as scheduled and walked and stumbled another eighteen kilometers (more than eleven miles). It had stopped snowing and the wind had died down, but it was still tough going. Most of the eighteen kilometers were on back roads with a couple feet of snow and drifts. We lost many more men before reaching our destination of Graustein. There we were quartered in barns and chicken houses. The Germans made no effort to feed us and the few rations from Stalag Luft III were depleted. The German guards did a complete one hundred and eighty degree turn as far as attitude was concerned. Gone was the German arrogance and in its place was a smile when spoken to. They were well aware that had it not been for American compassion they would probably be dead or heading towards a firing squad. Even the dogs seemed to detect the difference, no longer the lurching snarl, just a quiet growl.

Several times during the march, we had to give way to miles and miles of refugees heading west from Poland. Some had horse drawn wagons with all their belongings, including furniture. Others had cow drawn carts with few belongings, and many were just walking. Old, young and those in between plodded along to avoid capture by the Russians. It was a sad sight; especially

the children all huddled up trying to keep warm. They passed by the thousands without saying a word. Some of the P.O.W.'s tried to talk to them, but there was no response. They were almost like zombies, looking neither left or right, - just forward, at the rear of the wagon ahead.

The next day we walked another eighteen kilometers to an army post at Spremberg. There a count was made and then another two kilometers to the railroad station. By this time our food was gone and our hunger pains began. They were to last for the next three months. The march was ninety-four kilometers (fifty-eight miles) long and I have heard figures that two hundred to twenty-seven hundred P.O.W.'s were lost enroute. I would guess the number was somewhere in between considering the other three compounds of twenty-five hundred men each that followed us. I was told the twenty-seven hundred figure came from a B.B.C. broadcast. We had "canaries" that worked both ways. In addition we were buzzed several times, when weather permitted, by P-51's who, I assume, were reporting our journey and progress to Allied headquarters in England. We were also buzzed several times by German ME-I09's that sent us scurrying for the ditches. Fortunately they didn't fire, but they certainly succeeded in scaring us half to death.

At the Spremberg railroad station, a long line of "40 and 8" boxcars were waiting for our arrival. Supposedly there were fifty men to each boxcar, but it was so packed a person could not fall down even if so inclined. We were literally packed like sardines. There was hardly room to turn around and certainly no room to lay down or even squat. To make matters worse, horses had been the last occupants and no cleanup had been made after their departure. I was among the first to enter the car, so I was backed into a corner near a shuttered window, about eight by twelve inches in size and about seven feet from the floor. We pried it open, which gave us a little fresh air. About three hours later the train started and we were on our way. We thought the march was bad, but it could not compare to the next two days and three nights.

Within a short time, the air was so foul it was difficult to breath. Along with being "sardines" add some cases of diarrhea, sick men vomiting combined with horse manure, human urine and excrement and I think you get the picture. You have probably heard the comment about someone "who didn't have a pot to weewee in nor a window to throw it out of." Well, we had the pot (a Klim tin) and a window to throw it out of. The only problem was getting the pot to the window.

It had to move overhead through many feeble, clumsy and bungling hands before it got to the window. Combine that with the lurching of the boxcar and more often than not the pot was nearly empty when it's contents were thrown out the seven-foot high window. I and several other men around me soon became "specialists" in waste disposal.

Sleeping while standing was nearly impossible, just sort of a semi-consciousness or perhaps a better description is just numb. It was a long night.

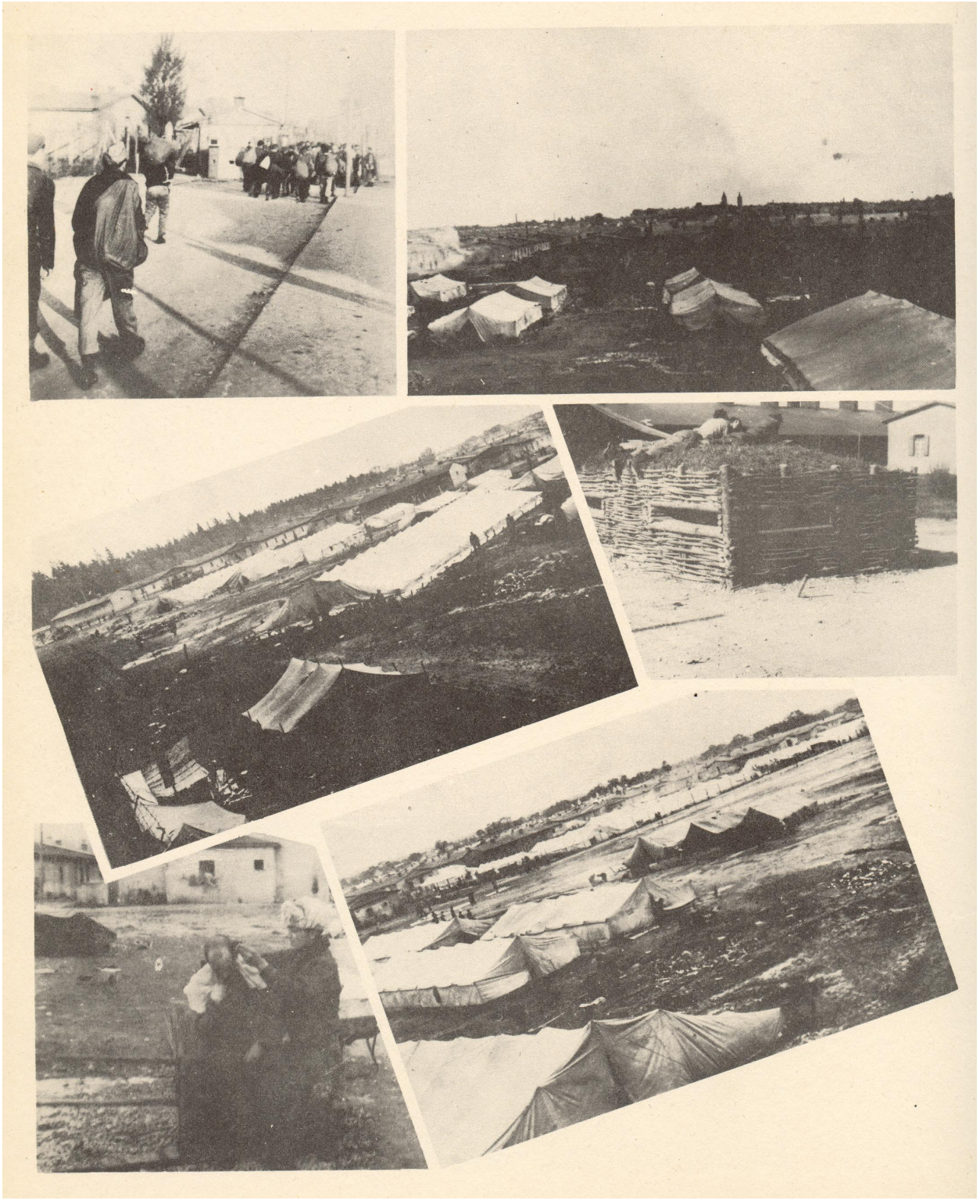
Sometime the next morning the train stopped and the door opened so the Germans could throw in a few loaves of bread. The bread was appreciated, but under the circumstances we ate very little.

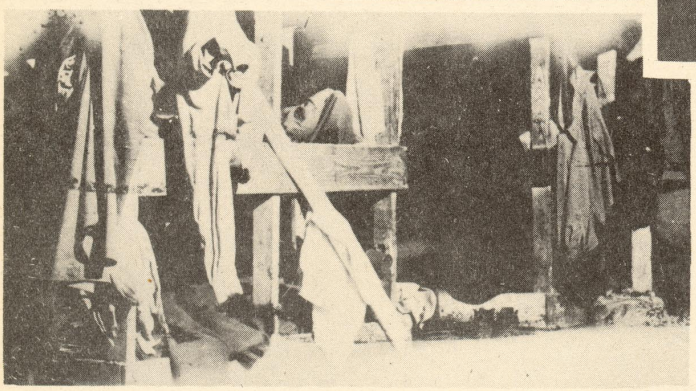
That afternoon the train stopped and we were allowed to get out to relieve ourselves. The siding was near some city and parallel to a road. P.O.W.'s lined up four and five deep in the snow bank for a half-mile with britches down. It would have been a comical scene had it not been so serious. At least the German civilians seemed to enjoy it as they walked by laughing and pointing and shouting whatever the German word is for defecating. Then we jumped back into the boxcar and the door slammed shut again into its familiar locked position. It remained locked that night, the next day and the following night, about thirty-eight hours of continuous standing time.

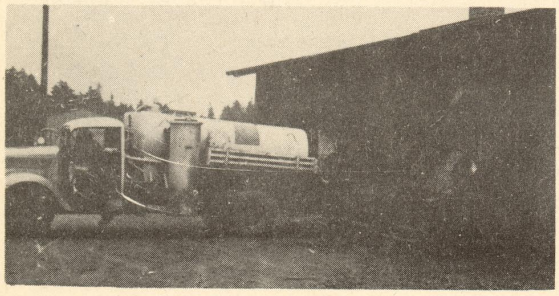
Late in the afternoon, as we approached Leipzig, we could hear the air raid sirens. Suddenly we pulled up to a sidetrack and to a rather abrupt stop. The marshalling yards were being bombed and strafed. About thirty minutes later we started moving and very slowly passed through the thoroughly bombed yard. Through the small window of our boxcar we could see smoking, grotesque shapes of boxcars and tracks scattered around.

The conditions in our boxcar deteriorated with each hour, so by the time we reached Moosburg on the morning of the fourth day, we were a sorry looking bunch of P.O.W.'s

Moosburg







Chapter IX

Stalag VII A, Moosburg, Germany was approximately twenty-five miles north of Munich and about ten miles east of Dachau. The camp was under the control of the Wehrmacht and guarded by soldiers from a well-known Alpine division famous for their five-foot long rifles and their uncanny accuracy in firing them.

It had been a short march from the train station to Stalag VII A, but a difficult one. We all had problems getting the leg muscles going again. We were herded into a horse barn where we spent the next week or so. The barn was so crowded that we slept in the stalls in three-hour shifts – one third of the men for the first three hours followed by the next third and then the last one third. While one third slept the other two thirds stood in the center aisle and passed the time as best they could. We were so packed in the stall that, literally, when one man turned over everyone turned over. Surprisingly the straw was fairly clean and being wedged so tightly the body heat kept us somewhat warm. That was also the first time I was introduced to fleas - millions of them.

Latrine facilities consisted of a single slit trench, which was fully occupied day and night. We did have fresh water from a faucet, which was a godsend.

Food was sparse and was mostly black bread and some kind of soup we immediately dubbed "green death." It was made of small leaves, twigs and rotten vegetables heated in what smelled like sour milk. More than one man took one look and then dashed for the slit trench - all too often not quite making it. To say it was a sickening sight and smell is putting it mildly, but when a person is really hungry, he will eat anything that even resembles food.

A short time later we moved into huge circus-like tents that had been erected several hundred feet from the horse barn. We had to sit and sleep on the ground, but at least we had room to stretch out. A few days later cots were brought in, so we now had a place to sleep and sit. You have to remember that it was still midwinter and a warm day was when the temperature got above zero.

One day a tremendous "whoosh" went over the tent top and nearly blew the tent down. We all rushed out to see what that was. It was an ME-262, the two-engine jet fighter that I had heard about in Italy but never saw in combat. That was my first sight and sound of a jet aircraft and I was really impressed. The ME-262 came over again and we couldn't believe the speed it was traveling - probably about twice the speed of a P-38. What an aircraft! Had Germany started manufacturing them earlier in the war, it could have made a drastic change in the timetable and possibly the outcome of the war.

A week or two afterwards we were moved into sandstone barracks which had been evacuated by Russian and British P.O.W.'s.

We had bunk beds three levels high sleeping twelve men in each area - three high, two deep and two bunks wide. Each had the familiar straw pallet about three inches thick and full of fleas. The fleas feasted day and night and especially liked the areas of the clothing around the waist, ankles and wrists. At night I could feel them running back and forth across my eyelids and into my nose and ears. I don't know what was worse, the lack of food or the fleas. I would probably say the fleas.

The barracks was divided into two "wards" with a stove and water basins in the center. Wood for firewood was scarce. The stove didn't produce much heat, but it was sufficient to warm food, so it was in use during the day and most of the evening. Most of the heating of food and water was by the Klim tin burner - two cans attached together where small pieces of wood about pencil size could be burned in the upper section. Very primitive but quite efficient.

We spent a lot of time lying on our bunks, trying to keep warm. But it was also thinking time. Thinking about home, the war, our situation, and how nice it would be to have some food. Any food would do if it would stop the hunger pains. I thought about all the delicious goodies my father used to bring home once a week in a gunnysack. He had an agreement with a grocer friend that the grocer would place all his stale bread and other pastry and bakery items in a sack. My father would pick up the sack each Thursday evening for the cost of fifty cents. All those donuts, bread, cinnamon rolls and jelly rolls. How nice it would have been to have some of that pastry or

even blood sausage and fish cheese. That was the problem, thinking of things that I could not have.

Americans have the unique ability to humorize regardless of the most severe and dire circumstances. I think humor kept most of us going because it took our minds off the situation perhaps not for long, but at least long enough for each to "regroup" mentally and face the next minute or hour. We were literally starving to death, with constant hunger pains plus the terrible fleas, yet we were still able to laugh. There was the sudden shout in the still of an evening, "Hey, Bill, what say we go down to Joe's Steak House for a bite of food? I think I'll have just a hamburger and fries this time. I'm getting tired of steak." Our response to that was groans - many of them combined with a few "shut ups" and "knock it off." But we couldn't keep from laughing or at least smiling. I thought many times how wonderful it would be to buy a car in New York and load the trunk and back with every type of pastry known to man. Then head west to Washington and to Mac eating pastry every mile of the way.

Speaking of food - about a month or so before liberation I was walking toward my bunk when a fellow I knew said, "Hey, Jule, you want some of this?" He held out his hand and in it was a piece of cooked meat that looked like a small chicken thigh. "What is it?" I asked. He replied, "It is part of a cat's leg. That's what the fellow that cooked it said it was." It seemed that somehow a cat had gotten into the compound, was immediately caught and cooked. I gladly accepted the food and then sat down on my bunk to chew and gnaw until there was not a speck of meat left. Afterwards I boiled the bone to make about a cupful of broth. I drank that and made another cup. In between times I chewed on the bone. I mashed the bone with a rock and made several more cups of broth until there was no taste left. In fact, there wasn't much bone left either. That was a good day.

Red Cross parcels were few and far between because Allied strafing missions were shooting up everything that moved. In fact, the "honey wagon" that emptied the latrine was even a target. One day it carne in painted all white with a large red cross painted on top so Allied aircraft wouldn't attack it. The fighter pilots didn't know if the honey wagons were carrying fuel or not so they were a bonafide target as far as the pilots were concerned.

All of us were getting so thin and weak many couldn't get out of their bunks without help. Then the Germans and the Allies made an agreement to allow a convoy of Red Cross trucks carrying food parcels to proceed from Switzerland to our camp and to other camps without fear of being bombed or strafed. What a great day that was to see the long line of white trucks with their large red crosses come rolling in. Real food again - not the "green death" and a few pieces of black bread.

Cigarettes were also a very scarce item. Most of the brands we used were Camels, Phillip Morse and Lucky Strikes. We smoked our cigarettes about 1/4" at a time and then carefully put them out till the next "smoke time." When a cigarette got too short to smoke, we placed it in a can tied to the foot of our bunks. When most of the cigarettes were gone, we rolled the butts in toilet tissue - sort of "roll your own" butts. When that smoke was down to the butt, it too was placed in the can for the next "roll your own." Before long we were smoking butts from the butts from the butts from the butts. By that time, the butts were unsmokeable, so we lit a fresh cigarette and repeated the whole process.

The favorite gambling game was blackjack with cigarettes and chocolate bars as money. Speaking of making of money - we didn't have any. The U.S. paid the Germans a few cents a day for each American held captive and I assume the Germans did likewise. We never saw the money. It was used for medical supplies, uniforms and blankets. So, no one had even a penny, but that didn't matter. We were not going any place anyway. Back to blackjack - it was fun and passed the time and I was always happy to walk away with a few more cigarettes than I started with.

Around the middle of March the weather warmed up enough to take a shower. The shower was an ordinary faucet mounted about six feet high from which the coldest water in the world flowed. It was a real "quickie" shower. But the thing that really stunned us was our physical condition. Our bones were sticking out all over - hip bones, ribs and knee joints. We hadn't had our clothes off for a couple months, so we had no idea what was happening to our bodies. It was a real

shocker to see ourselves as skeletons with skin stretched over them. I would guess I was down close to one hundred pounds to one hundred and ten pounds, if that much. Another shocker was the effect of the fleas feasting twenty-four hours a day. I, as well as the rest of the men, had about a two-inch ring of raw flesh around the wrists and ankles and about a six-inch wide strip around my waist. No skin left - just raw red meat.

The Germans frequently searched the buildings. All able-bodied P.O.W.'s were rousted out and kept away from the building by guards with their dogs. On one such occasion we watched B-17's by the hundreds pass nearly overhead on their way to bomb Munich. The anti-aircraft fire was ferocious. One B-17 was hit by AA fire or by a German fighter and smoke began streaming from one engine. The crew of that aircraft didn't know it, but there were ten thousand fellow flyers on the ground rooting for them. Hundreds were shouting, "Hit the fire button! Hit it again!" Every bomber pilot on the ground was flying that aircraft. They knew exactly what that pilot and co-pilot were doing or trying to do. The smoke stopped and you should have heard the cheers of ten thousand men. Men shook hands and patted one another on the back. You also should have heard the groan as the smoke reappeared. Again all the "talk" to the pilot and within a few minutes the smoke disappeared and again a huge cheer. By this time the B-17 had dropped several miles behind his formation. We watched in awe as he disappeared into the black cloud of flak heading for his bomb release point. That was guts and bravery in its highest form. Yet that was only one incident that had been repeated hundreds of times during the war.

Several times late at night during our stay at Stalag VII A, we were rudely awakened by machine gun and cannon fire from an aircraft flying low over the camp. The first time we all hit the floor faster than it takes to write this. They were British Beaufighters (night fighters) strafing the Moosburg railroad yard and using the camp as the point of attack, which was scary to say the least.

The day president Roosevelt died was a bad day for us. We had no idea what effect, if any, it would have on the war. News from our "canary" was very little and very sporadic. The Germans kept such a close watch on us it was nearly impossible to use it. In addition, the X committee was pretty well scattered around the camp, so it was no longer well organized. The British lent us

their Chaplain and he delivered the eulogy at a special memorial service.

Several days before our liberation, we could hear artillery shells exploding as the front came closer. At night the sky brightened by what looked like not too distant lightning as the fighting continued.

Upper left: Honey Wagon

Center Right: Red Cross trucks that brought desperately needed food

Soldiers of the British Commonwealth!

Soldiers of the United States of America!

The great Bolshevik offensive has now crossed the frontiers of Germany. The men in the Moscow Kremlin believe the way is open for the conquest of the Western world. This will certainly be the decisive battle for us. But it will also be the decisive battle for England, for the United States and for the maintenance of Western civilisation.

Or whatever today remains of it.

The events in the Baltic States, in Poland, Hungary and Greece are proof enough for us all to see the real program behind the mask of Moscow's socalled **"limited national aims"** and reveals to us how Moscow interprets democratic principles both for the countries she has conquered and also for Germany and **for your countries as well.**

It is also clear enough **today** that the issue at stake is not merely the destruction of Germany and the extermination of the German race. **The fate of your country too is at stake.** This means the fate of your wives, of your children, your home. It also means everything that make life livable, lovable and honorable for you.

Each one of you who has watched the development of Bolshevism throughout this war knows in his innermost heart the truth about Bolshevism. Therefore we are now addressing you as white men to other white men. This is not an appeal. At least we feel there is no alternative for any of us, who feels himself a citizen of our continent and our civilisation but to stop the red flood here and now.

Extraordinary events demand extraordinary measures and decisions. One of these decisions is now put up to you. We address ourselves to you regardless of your rank or of your nationality.

Soldiers! We are sure there are some amongst you who have recognized the danger of Bolshevik-Communism for his own country. We are sure that many of you have seen clearly what this war is now leading to. **We are sure that many of you see what the consequences of the destruction of Europe – not just of Germany but of Europe – will mean to your own country.** Therefore we want to make the following proposal to all of you.

We think that our fight has also become your fight. If there are some amongst you who are willing to take consequences and who are willing to join the ranks of the German soldiers who fight in this battle which will decide both the fate of Germany and the fate of your countries we should like to know it. We invite you to join our ranks and the tens of thousands of volunteers from the communist crushed and conquered nations of eastern Europe, which have had to choose between submission under an most brutal asiatic rule – or a national existence in the future under European ideas, many of which, of course are your own ideals.

Whether you are willing to fight in the front-line or in the service corps: we make you this solemn promise: Whoever as a soldier of his own nation is willing to join the common front for the common cause, will be freed immediately after the victory of the present offensive and can return to his own country via Switzerland.

All that we have to ask from you is the word of the gentleman not to fight directly or indirectly for the cause of Bolshivik-Communism so long as this war continues.

At this moment we do not ask you to think about Germany. We ask you to think about your own country, we ask you just to measure the chances which you and your people at home would have to, in case the Bolshivik-Communism onslaught should overpower Europe. We must and we will put an end to Bolshevism and we will achieve this under all circumstances. Please inform the convoy-officer of your decision and you will receive the privileges of our own men for we expect you to share their duty. This is something which surpasses all national bounderies. The world today is confronted by the fight of the east against the west. We ask you to think it over.

Are you for the culture of West or the barbaric asiatic East?

Make your decision now!

Distributed to each P.O.W. by the Germans – March 1945

Liberation Day – April 29, 1945

Chapter X

Our day of liberation, 29 April 1945, arrived. It all started about nine-thirty in the morning when a P-51 buzzed the camp and did a slow roll as he passed overhead. He made a tight turn and again slow rolled as he passed overhead. He was apparently trying to tell us the army was close by and heading in our direction. An hour or so later we watched as tanks came over a hill heading our way. As the tanks drew nearer the Germans, began fighting among themselves. The Wehrmacht guards and personnel wanted to turn the camp over to the Americans, but the S.S. and the Gestapo didn't like that idea, so a small war broke out in the German section of the camp. There was a lot of rifle and machine gun fire with stray bullets flying about, but fortunately no one was seriously hurt. The battle went on for nearly an hour and then all was quiet except for American tank and rifle fire.

As the American forces approached, the German guards began throwing their rifles over the fence to the P.O.W.'s. Some guards came prepared with wire cutters, which they promptly used. They came into the camp shouting, "We are now your prisoners." They had enough of war.

The most impressive event for me was that I happened to be looking at a Church steeple when it suddenly disappeared in a cloud of dust and debris. Apparently there were German snipers in the steeple but one accurate tank shell took care of that situation.

Then the tanks, accompanied by infantrymen, rolled through the gate and into the compound. The thrill of liberation is indescribable. Every man was laughing and crying at the same time while waving a small "homemade" American flag. I don't know where all the flags were hidden. Maybe like mine - under the insole of my G.I. shoe. Just to see the American flag again was an unforgettable experience. Some flags could hardly be called a flag, but they all had the stars and stripes and all were beautiful to our eyes. And what a roar it was as we saw the swastika flag come down and the American flag raised. We were free!

The G.I.'s in the tanks tossed out chocolate bars, K rations and C rations, which to us were like manna from heaven. I made the mistake, along with hundreds of others, of eating a whole

chocolate bar at one time. Within five to ten minutes all of us were making a frenzied dash to the latrine with severe diarrhea. Our systems just couldn't handle all that richness.

Within an hour or so, the G.I.'s lined up the German guards and asked us who the good ones and the bad ones were. As I recall three guards were pointed out as being the "bad guys." They were promptly marched away. A short time later shots rang out in their direction of departure.

That same afternoon General Patton arrived in his tank. What an impressive figure he was – bone handled pistols and all. He climbed out of the tank and stood on top of it while he delivered an excellent talk - nothing fancy, just how glad he was that he and his men had been given the honor of liberating us. His was a unit from the 7th Army attached to the 3rd Army that led the spearhead that freed us. They had but one objective and that was to capture Stalag VII A. It's hard to visualize General Patton talking and wiping the tears from his eyes at the same time, but that is exactly what happened. The renegade general had a heart in spite of all the bad publicity.

As the general spoke, he was frequently interrupted by heavy artillery fire. American howitzer "105's" located about a half mile west of the camp were firing at several pockets of German resistance about a half mile to the east of camp. The shells made an eerie whistling whoosh as they passed overhead, probably no higher than a hundred feet. But that was friendly fire and we gave a cheer as each shell passed over us.

The next day the medics arrived and so did American G.I. bread. It tasted like angel food cake to us. G.I. bread never did have too good a reputation, but we thought it was the world's greatest. Along with the bread came "C" rations (canned food). We all thought we had died and gone to heaven. Well, not quite, but it was sure delicious!

The medics treated everyone for fleabites by smearing some type of ointment or salve on the affected areas. The ten thousand men treated must have taken many drums full of medicine - if it came in drums. Anyway, it did soothe the sores and that was a big relief.

Sometime the following day someone "confiscated" the German personnel files, so that is how I

got my official prisoner of war registration cards. The cards, my German dog tag and an old olive drab wool muffler were my only souvenirs of my P.O.W. experience.

Wes' Kriege Dog Tag on The Wool Muffler

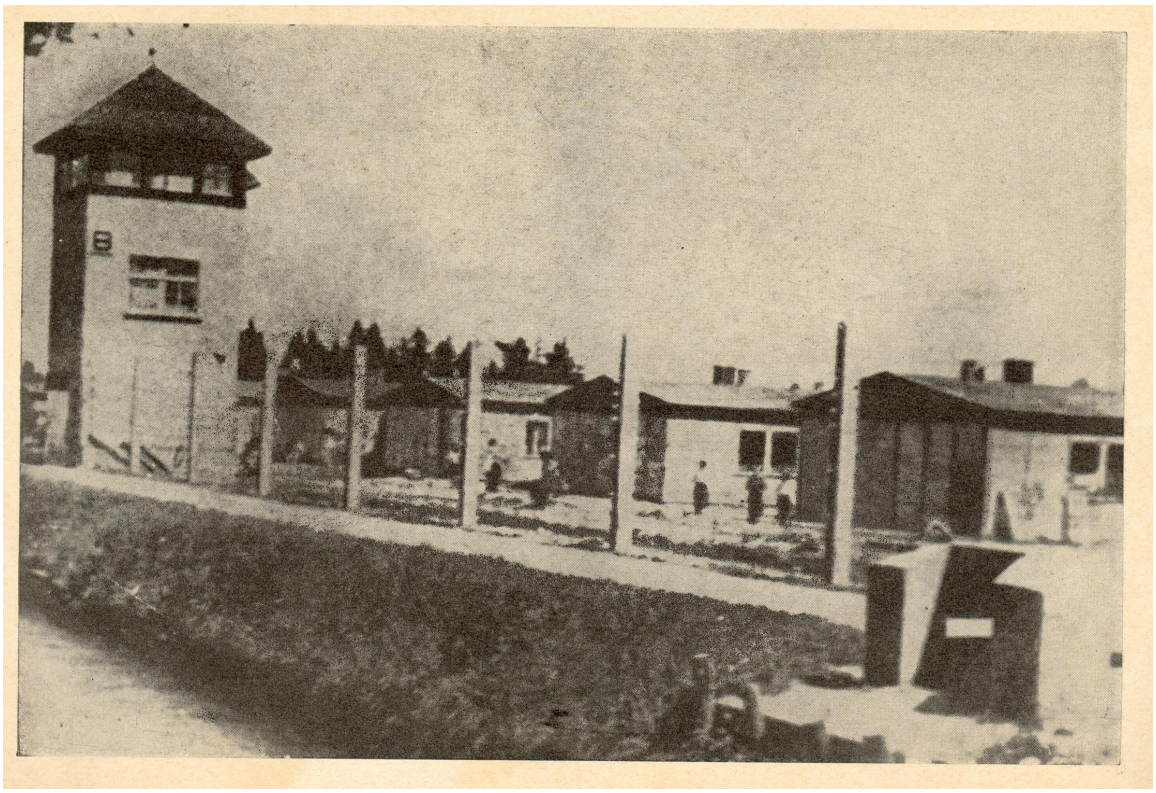
Belt Buckle Relieved from Moosburg Commandant

Several days later none of us thought the military was moving fast enough toward getting us home. Therefore, many of us P.O.W.'s left the camp by one means or another and headed west. I was no exception. Another P.O.W. and I talked an ambulance driver into taking us out of camp, which he gladly did. He took us to an apartment building cellar where he knew some infantrymen were staying for the night. The G.I.'s were extremely nervous when they answered the door knock. All their rifles were pointed in our direction. Once they knew we were American

Ex-P.O.W.'s they couldn't do enough for us. In fact, they insisted that we have some decent beds for the night. They went upstairs and rousted a couple out of their apartment so we could use their beds. How strange it was to sleep with sheets and on a feather mattress.

The next morning we hitched a ride on a half-track personnel carrier that was heading west. The driver said he wanted to drive to Dachau Concentration Camp about ten miles west of Moosburg to see what was going on. We arrived there along with what seemed like hundreds of other military vehicles and got in line as the vehicles inched their way past the main gate. We had a fairly good view because the half-track sat higher than the numerous jeeps and staff cars. The Germans were still carrying bodies from the buildings and, stacking them like cordwood. There was also a long line of German civilians that stretched for blocks. The civilians were from Dachau and were being forced to tour the camp so they could see first hand the terrible atrocities committed by their fellow countrymen in the name of the Third Reich. We spent that night at an army bivouac area where we were able to take a much-needed bath.

Dachau



Dachau

Dachau

The following day we got a ride in a jeep going west. Once again the harsh realities of war were demonstrated. As we drove down a highway there was a man walking on our side of the road going in the same direction. The jeep driver swore and said something about the German should know better than to walk on the highway. He sideswiped the man and sent him spinning off into a ditch. We were astounded. "Why did you do that?"

His reply was "To keep the Germans of the roads."

I thought that was carrying the idea a little too far, but he seemed satisfied that he had done the right thing.

We spent that night at an advanced P-51 airfield where we were given a quick medical

examination by the flight surgeon. He decided that even though we were skinny as rails (I had a twenty-two inch waist according to his tape measure), we were physically fit to continue our journey westward. We were then treated to another good bath, supplied with a completely new set of clothing, including the green blouse with pink trousers. All of our old clothing, including shorts and T-shirts, was burned, with the exception of my muffler. I told them I wanted to keep it, so it was immediately tossed into a pot of boiling water. That muffler and I had endured too much hardship to see it destroyed.

We were then served an enormous meal of turkey with all the trimmings. We loaded our trays with all the goodies. We were going to eat like kings. But not quite. After eating perhaps a cupful of food our stomachs were stuffed. Our stomachs had shrunk so much that a very small amount of food was all we could hold. We really felt guilty about throwing all that good food into the garbage can. A month before, the amount of food left on the tray would have kept us going for at least a week. The army medics eventually developed a rehabilitation program regarding P.O.W.'s and food. P.O.W.'s would be given only small portions of food with the portions getting larger as their stomachs enlarged. I believe that program proved to be an utter failure because the P.O.W.'s wanted no part of it. They had dreamed of food too long.

The next day we headed west in an eighteen-wheeler pulling a tank carrier trailer. We were moving along at fifty to sixty miles an hour when we entered a town with many civilians on wagons and carts or were walking in the street. The driver increased the speed and I yelled. "You’re going to run over those people!" There was no reaction on his part except to set his jaw. He pushed a little harder on the accelerator and laid on the horn. We went through that town hitting and scattering carts, wagons and people in all directions.

As we left town the driver said. "The civilians didn't get out of the road for one purpose and that was to slow down the Allied advance by slowing up the delivery of supplies to the front lines. We are under orders to run over them if necessary." There could be no argument on that point as far as we were concerned. Surely those civilians knew the war was lost, yet continued to believe that their actions might just turn the war around in favor of Germany.

We stopped at an army camp for lunch where there was a huge wire fenced field full of thousands of German P.O.W.'s. As we stood there talking to a staff sergeant, he noticed we didn't have watches. He asked why and we told him they were confiscated when we were captured. He asked, "Want another one?"

"Sure, it would be nice." we answered.

"Come with me." He instructed the guards to let us in the compound. He then went from one prisoner to another checking for watches. He finally stopped in front of a German lieutenant.

"Like this one?"

"Sure." we said.

He then motioned for the German to give him the watch. The German said "Nein."

The sergeant then grabbed the man's hand and pulled his bayonet at the same time. He again told the German to give him the watch. Again, the German said, "Nein."

At that moment I said. "Wait, Sergeant, I would like to have a watch, but not that much."

"I'll be glad to get it for you Lieutenant - just say the word."

"I thank you, but I'll get one later on." With that we left the compound.

The following day we were driven to an airfield where a C-47 was scheduled to fly to Paris. We finally convinced the operations officer that we weren't A.W.O.L. by showing him our P.O.W. registration cards and German dog tags. During our flight how green and peaceful the French countryside looked. It was nice to be back in the air. Upon landing, we hitched a ride into Paris to the American Army Headquarters where we reported for duty. My twenty-eighth mission had finally ended.

The next day we boarded a train for LaHarve and to Camp Lucky Strike on the French coast. It was a processing center for homeward bound ships. We were there for about a week. Then we boarded a Swedish passenger ship and started the journey home. The first day we sailed on a zigzag course. There was one German submarine that had not been accounted for. Word finally came that the V-Boat had surrendered, so it was then New York straight ahead. New York and then home. How tranquil the waters had become!

Did my dream come true - pinks and greens, silver wings and captain's bars? Yes and no. When I received my captain bars in 1953, Army pinks and greens were out and Air Force blue was in. I couldn't help but think how nice those bars would have looked on a green blouse.

Spokane, Washington - 1945

And Mac's ring? It is resting on cotton in a small, box safe and secure. It earned a permanent

rest. I guess if there was one thing that helped me the most to survive, it was that ring. One glance and it brought back all my fondest memories and represented all the hopes and dreams of the future.

The Hungarian major? I was interviewed by the O.S.I. (Office of Special Investigation - now the C.I.A.) shortly after my arrival home. They were interested in all the details and I assume had plans to find him if he was still alive. I never knew what the outcome was. He may have been killed in Budapest, or perhaps he made it back to Canada and then back to Sumas.

And what are my thoughts about food? I have not had a bad meal since liberation. It is all good - some perhaps tastier than others, but all good. One thing is certain, there is no food wasted at my home.

A thought about food - according to the Geneva Conventions no holding nation could require captured officers to perform manual labor. Enlisted personnel could be used to clear debris, tend crops and work of a similar nature. In return they would receive additional rations. I can assure you that all of the officers would have been most happy to perform manual labor if by doing so it would eliminate hunger pains. I think there is a lesson there. If all able bodied permanently unemployed could experience hunger pangs for a week or two, there would be sudden drastic drop in their numbers.

And how have the waters been on the river of life since the war? Very tranquil and smooth other than a few ripples here and there.

And my wife Mac? She is sitting here by my side waiting for me to finish this page so she can get it in the typewriter.

Epilogue

In 1962 I was transferred to Giebelstadt, West Germany. My family and I visited Dachau twice during the period between 1962 and 1965. It was a mind shattering experience. The large crematorium furnaces were still in place, as well as the execution site. Several barracks were still standing, but most had been destroyed. There is something extremely foreboding about the camp. I don't think a person could ever be the same after a visit to it.

I had the feeling that there were thousands of spirits of good and evil battling fiercely overhead while swirling like a tornado. If I closed my eyes I could see them. Such was the profound effect it had on me and, from what I saw, on other visitors. I watched while women, as soon as they stepped on the grounds, broke down in uncontrollable weeping.

The camp execution site was located on a small knell. The Germans had found it necessary to build a trough so that blood could run down into a Pit at a lower level. That's how many executions took place on a daily basis. Incomprehensible, yet a reality.

At the opposite end of the camp were the huge pits nearly full of human ash and fragments of bone the furnaces missed. Again, almost impossible to comprehend!

Contrary to popular belief, Dachau was not built primarily for Jews. It was originally built to accommodate the enemies of the Third Reich who came from every country under German control. Individuals thought to be a threat, or a possible threat, to the Third Reich found themselves in Dachau along with those convicted of serious crimes. As best I can recall, some eighty thousand men, women and children were shot, hung, bludgeoned, or starved to death tens of thousands being Jews. It was said that even at the time of our visits when atmospheric conditions were right, the smell of death was still present.

My family and I also visited the camp at Moosburg. The barbed wire fences and sentry boxes were gone along with the horse barn. The sandstone buildings were still there and looked the same. The building I was in had been used as a woodworking shop according to a sign. But all

the buildings were empty. There were no visual indications that it had been a P.O.W camp.

The pictures I have enclosed are from the book "Clipped Wings" published in 1945 by R. W. Kimball. Kimball lived in the room across the hall from mine at Stalag Luft III. Many of the photos were from the German official files while others were taken by P.O.W.'s with "homemade" cameras. Lenses were obtained from German guards who had let themselves be compromised at one time or another. They were then subject to blackmail by the P.O.W.'s. In effect it was, "Bring me a camera lens, or it will be necessary to report your indiscretion to your superiors." All's fair in love and war!

Glossary

Buchenwalde - One of Germany's most notorious concentration camps.

Dachau - Another of Germany's notorious concentration camps which has received the most publicity due to its location in West Germany.

Ferret - Germans hired to maintain the camp and act as "snoopers." Constantly looking for contraband equipment and escape materials.

Gestapo - The German secret police noted for the brutality of its methods.

Kriegsgefangenen - Prisoner of war, "Kriegie" for short.

Luftwaffe - German Air Force.

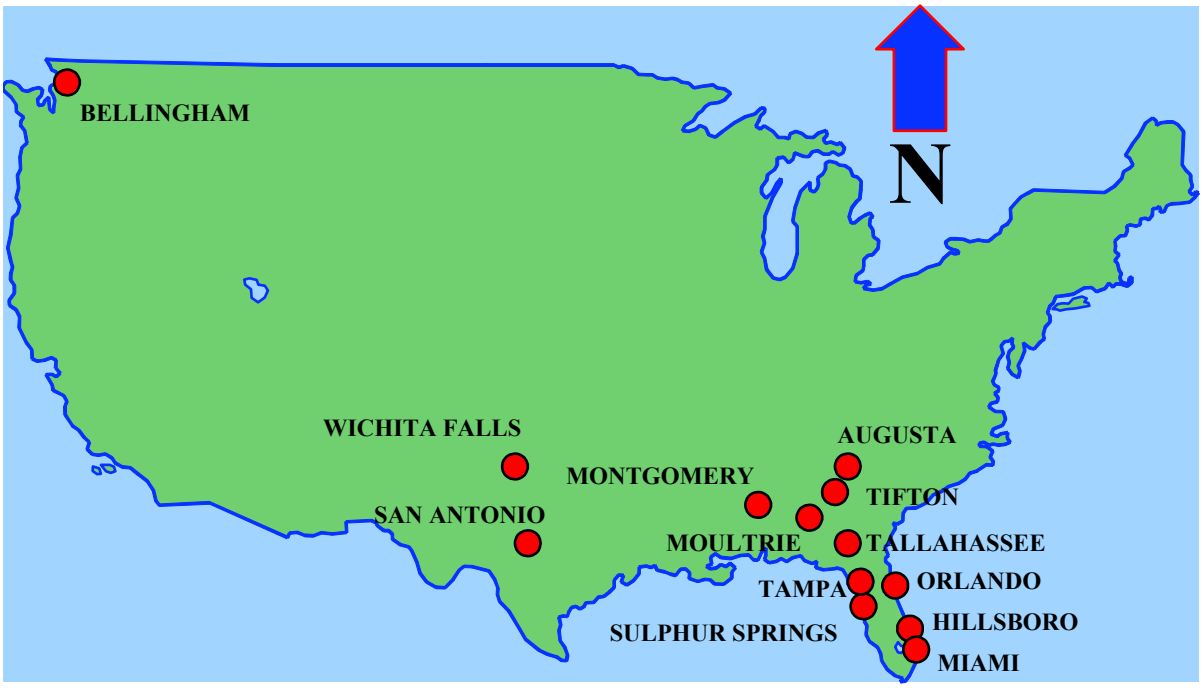
S.A.O. - Senior American officer.

S.S. - Shutzstaffel - Hitler's elite of the elite military personnel. Hitler's personal army handpicked as perfect examples of the Third Reich "super race." In addition to fighting and dying for the Fuhrer, they had another responsibility - father as many children as possible to turn Hitler's dream of a German super race into a reality. The many S.S. troops I saw were tall, handsome and perfect examples of manhood. Many were blonde and all were very distinguished by their stature and impeccable uniforms. Noted for their brutality and their insane loyalty to Hitler, administrators of all concentration camps.

Stalag - Camp, area of confinement.

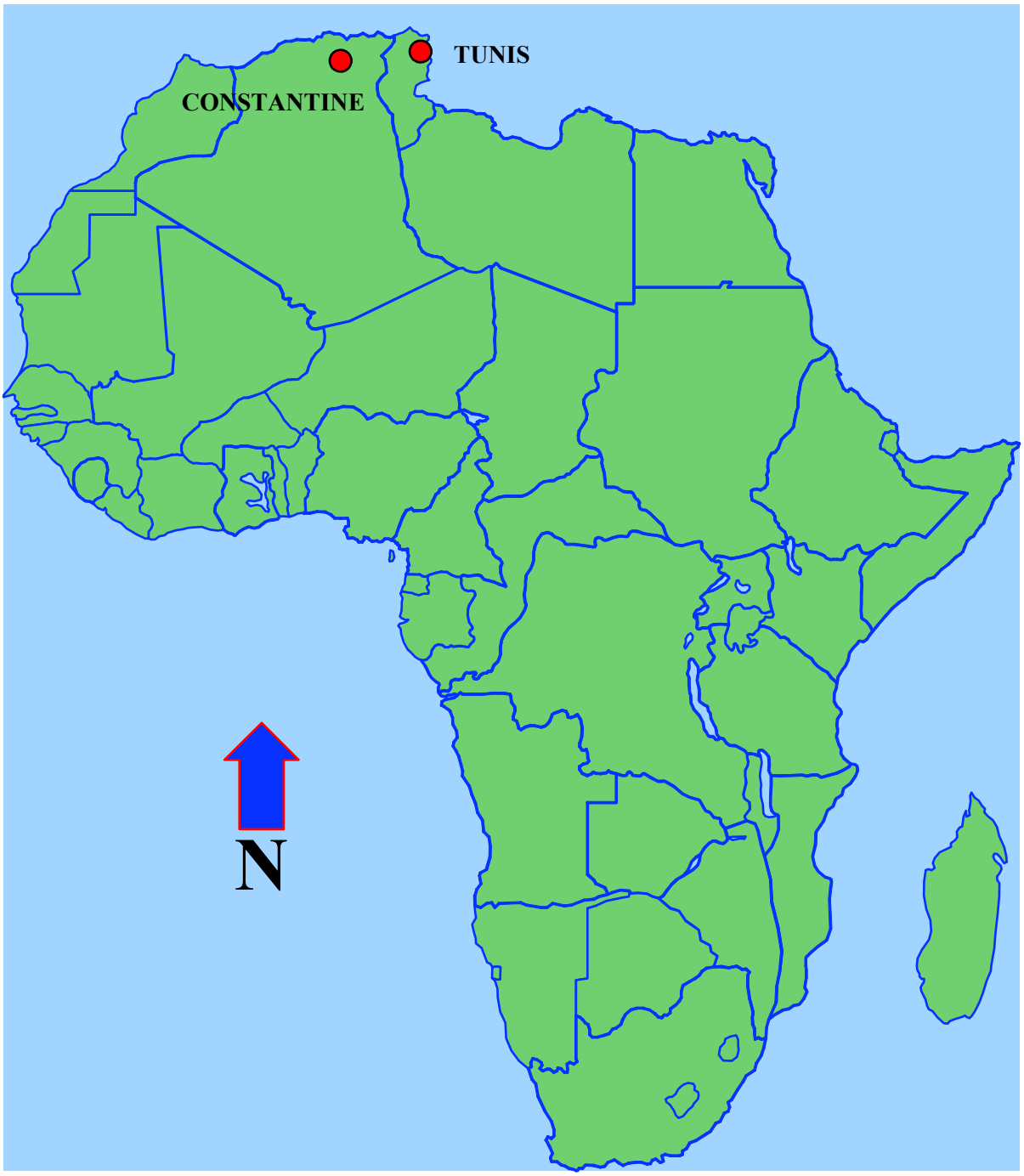
Wehrmacht - German Army.

Maps

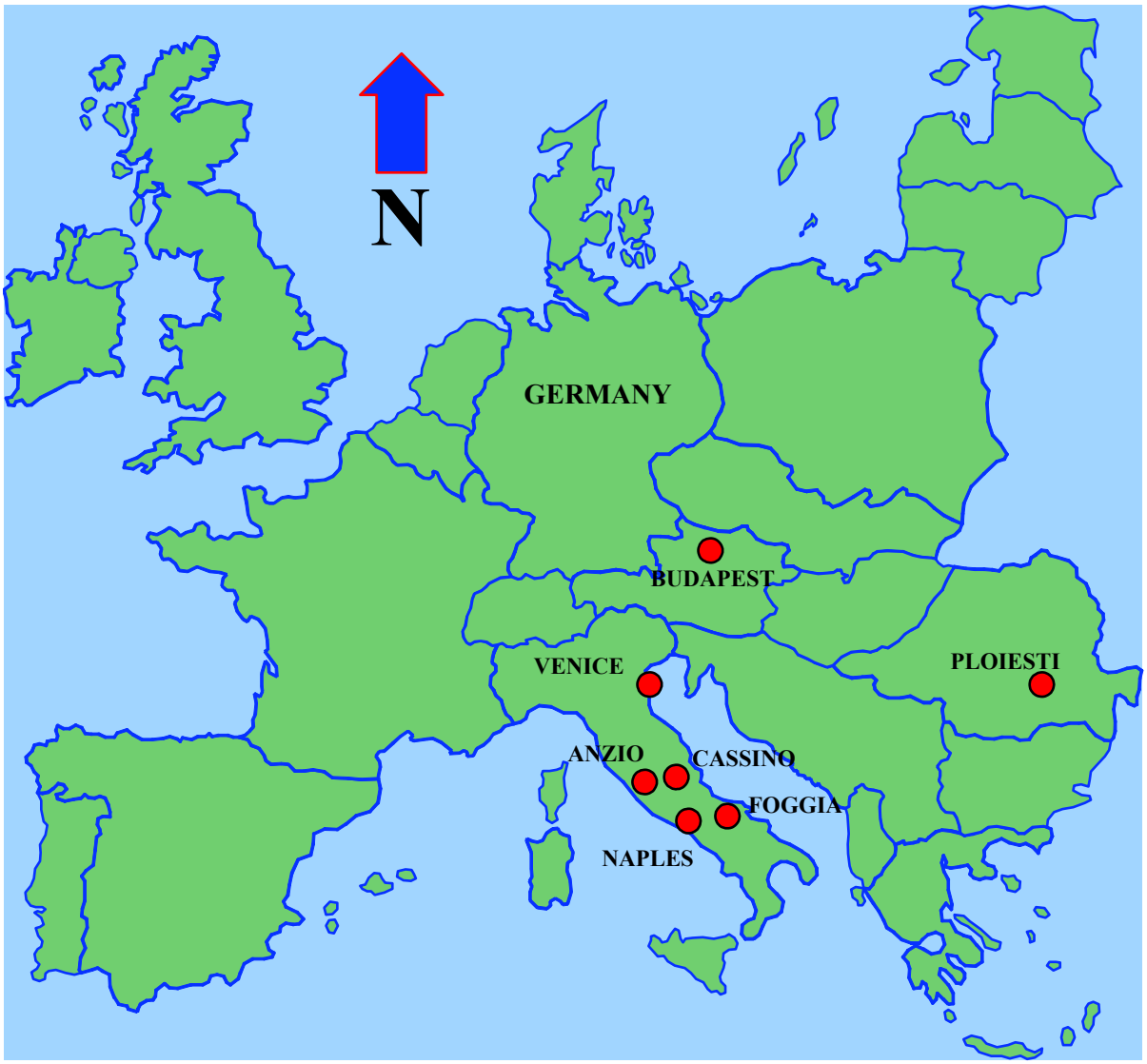


Map - United States

Map - South America



Map - Africa


N
GERMANY
BUDAPEST
VENICE
PLOIESTI
ANZIO
CASSINO
FOGGIA
NAPLES

Map - Europe

Maxine R. and Wesley L. Jule
November 1988
Visiting the R. H. Richards, Jr. Ranch
Bandera, Texas

Figure List

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